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MEMOIRS

OF THE

QUEENS OF FRANCE.

VOL. II.

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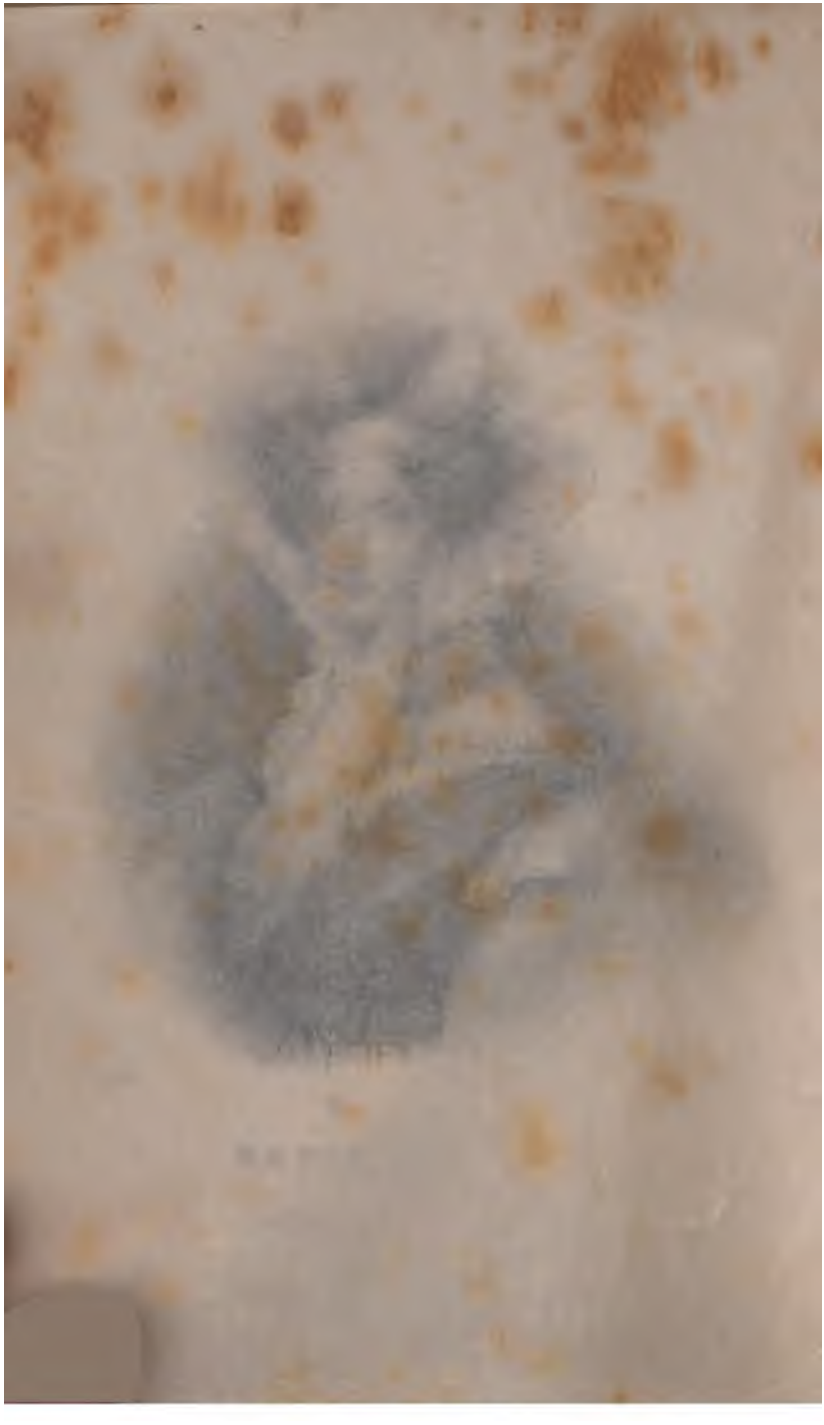

MEMOIRS

OF THE

QUEENS OF FRANCE.

BY Mrs FORBES BUSH.

SECOND EDITION.

DEDICATED, BY EXPRESS PERMISSION,

TO

THE QUEEN OF THE FRENCH;

AND CONTAINING

A PORTRAIT AND MEMOIR OF HER MAJESTY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, PUBLISHER,

GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

1843.

DC 36.7
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1843
v. 2

LONDON:
Printed by WILLIAM CLOWES and SONS,
Stamford Street.

QUEENS OF FRANCE.

BRANCH OF BOURBON.

QUEEN MARGARET DE VALOIS.

(Reign of Henry IV.)

Queen Margaret de Valois was first wife of Henry the Great, and daughter of Henry II. and Catherine de Medicis; she was born in 1552, and celebrated for her beauty, talents, and vices. Margaret possessed Louis XII.'s easy good-nature, Francis I.'s taste for literature, and Henry III.'s superstitious piety; but she had also very depraved principles, and at an early age plunged into every species of disorder, having neither good example nor strength of mind to resist the seduction of vice in the midst of the most corrupt court in the world.

Like her brother, Henry III., she united licentiousness and devotion; for at church, and in the many religious processions in which she assisted, she appeared a model of piety. Margaret's features were not regular, but very pleasing; she had soft

and expressive eyes, graceful movements, and superb hair; she devoted much time to her toilette, in which she displayed great taste, and was the first who introduced the fashion of wearing gems and flowers in the hair.

Catherine de Medicis, proud of the eulogium which was bestowed on her daughter, conducted her to all places which she herself frequented. She took her to the interview at Bayonne, and Margaret, in her memoirs, has given a lively description of the entertainments which took place there; she also mentions the part she played in the political intrigues of the time, and the especial favour which her mother bestowed on her third son, the Duke of Anjou.

The Duke of Guise was very much attached to Margaret de Valois, and would have married her, although well acquainted with her disorderly conduct; but she was desirous of wearing a crown, and consented to become the wife of Sebastian, King of Portugal. This marriage was prevented by the King of Spain, who was jealous of the extension of power which Portugal would have gained by an alliance with France. At that time the Huguenots, who had been in constant warfare with the members of the Royal house, were

allured to Paris by the engagement Catherine de Medicis entered into with their chief, the young King of Navarre, to give him her daughter Margaret de Valois in marriage; and the princess, though scrupulous in her religious observances, did not object to ally herself to a Protestant prince.

The marriage was celebrated in 1572, with much ceremony. On account of the difference in their religion, the Cardinal de Bourbon pronounced the nuptial benediction at the church of Notre Dame de Paris, after which Henry conducted his bride to the altar, and while mass was repeating, walked in the cloister with some of the nobles of his court. After the conclusion of the ceremony the King of Navarre accompanied Margaret to the Episcopal Palace, where, as usual, a sumptuous banquet was given to the newly married pair. The queen mother provided most brilliant fêtes on the occasion of this marriage, which continued for seven days, and it was in the midst of these pleasures that she prepared the horrible sacrifices of Saint Bartholomew.

On the evening previous to the massacres, Catherine, finding it late, recommended Margaret to retire. "Comme je faisais la révérence," says Margaret in her memoirs, "ma sœur de Lorraine

me prend par le bras, m'arrête, et se prenant fort à pleurer, me dit : ' Mon Dieu, ma sœur, n'y allez pas.' " Catherine was irritated, and reprimanded her daughter for her imprudence : to which Claude replied, "Quelle apparence, de l'envoyer ainsi sacrifier? S'ils découvrent quelque chose, ils se vengeront sur elle." This altercation concluded with another recommendation to Margaret to retire. Her sister burst into tears, and embraced her. "Et moi," she continues, "je m'en alla toute transie et toute éperdue, sans pouvoir imaginer ce que j'avais à craindre." She then relates that early in the morning the King of Navarre rose and went out, accompanied by several of his gentlemen, after which she composed herself to sleep, but was soon suddenly aroused by sinister cries ; the door of her apartment was forced open, and a young man named Tersan rushed in covered with blood, and followed by four archers ; he seized the Princess in his arms, and she protected him from their blows. At length the captain of the guard arrived, dismissed his archers, and at Margaret's request accorded him his life ; he then conducted the Queen of Navarre to her sister's apartment, and as she entered the antechamber of the Duchess of Lorraine a gentleman was killed

by the stroke of a halberd not three paces from her, when, overwhelmed with the sight of such horrors, she fell insensible into the arms of Nancay, the captain of the guard. Charles IX. sent for the King of Navarre and the Prince de Condé, and fiercely informed them that they should have three days to consider whether they would abjure the Protestant faith; which if they refused, their lives should pay the forfeit of their obstinacy.

The marriage of the King of Navarre with Margaret had been the pretext and means by which the Protestants were assembled at Paris; but their leaders, the King of Navarre and Prince de Condé, were spared, and Catherine de Medicis, who was grieved to lose her prey, insinuated to Margaret that her marriage should be annulled, not only because Henry was her cousin, but also because she was exposing herself to eternal condemnation for living with a Protestant, and offered her the means of breaking off the marriage if she would consent to it. But Margaret, although very fanatical, and moreover indifferent to her husband, remembered that this rupture would deprive her of the crown of Navarre, and indignantly rejected her mother's insidious offer: to this refusal France is indebted for the paternal reign of Henry the Great.

Although Margaret was one of the handsomest and most clever women in Europe, and Henry possessed many excellent qualities, there was great incompatibility between them, and as their marriage was entirely political, it was not long before their mutual indifference became mutual aversion. Charles IX. said, "En donnant ma sœur Margot au Roi de Navarre, je la donne à tous les Huguenots du royaume." For in fact this princess put no bounds to her disgraceful conduct, which was publicly commented on. Jane d'Albret, in speaking to her son of his future wife, made this remark: "Elle est bien avisée, mais nourrie en la plus maudite et corrompice compagnie qui fut jamais." Happily for her peace, the amiable and clear-sighted mother had ceased to exist before the accomplishment of the evils which resulted from this ill-judged union.

Henry of Navarre and the Duke of Alençon secretly swore to revenge the death of Coligny and the other victims of Saint Bartholomew. Two of the Duke of Anjou's favourite friends were to head the troops against the queen mother, but the conspiracy was discovered, the manœuvres of Henry were made known, and the two favourites, La Mole and Coconas, were arrested. Margaret wrote a memoir on the occasion, in which she jus-

tifies her husband without compromising his royal dignity, but the merit of this action is diminished by the circumstance of her defence having been principally dictated by her affection for La Mole, whom she wished to save: but she failed in her attempt; he and Coconas were decapitated, and on the scaffold the former recommended himself to the mercy of heaven and the prayers of Margaret de Valois. This princess, in company with her sister the Duchess of Cleves, who was attached to Coconas, went after night-fall to seek the heads of these two gentlemen, which they embalmed, and interred in Saint Martin's monastery.

On the occasion of the Duke of Anjou's accession to the throne of Poland, the ambassadors were struck with astonishment at Margaret's abilities, she having been the only one at court capable of replying to the harangue of the Bishop of Cracow in Latin, which was a subject of great triumph to a princess who so much loved admiration.

The Duke of Alençon, Henry of Navarre, and the Prince of Condé again raised the standard of revolt in 1576, and although the Queen of Navarre took no part in the intrigues, she was nevertheless retained a prisoner in her apartment at the Louvre; but this captivity was of short duration, and it gave

her an opportunity to favour the escape of her brother, the Duke of Alençon; after which, Henry having retired to Navarre, she begged permission to be allowed to join him. During the journey Margaret received great honours, and was magnificently entertained at all the towns through which she passed, until she reached Bearn, where she lived for five years on tolerable terms with her husband. She quietly suffered the king's numerous infidelities, and even treated some of his favourites with complaisance. She could not, however, obtain any indulgence from him in regard of the Catholic religion, which was a circumstance of great grief to her. At Pau there was not one Catholic chapel, and Margaret was obliged to hear mass in a small room of the palace which was not capable of containing more than seven or eight persons; and moreover, to prevent the Catholics from attending divine worship there, the bridge of the château was drawn up during the service.

On one occasion several Catholics, whose zeal was excited by the obstacles they met with, succeeded in forcing their way into the little sanctuary; upon which the king's secretary, Monsieur Dupin, being informed of it, arrested and sent them to prison. Margaret, who was greatly incensed at this

circumstance, complained to the king, and compromised her dignity by declaring that she would quit the court if Dupin was not dismissed: accordingly Henry discharged his secretary, but he entertained great resentment towards Margaret for imposing this sacrifice on him.

At the recommencement of the war between the Protestants and Catholics, in 1580, Margaret saw her favourite brother take up arms against her husband. Marshal Biron penetrated into Guyenne, and hostilities were carried as far as Nerac, the residence of the court of Navarre: the queen, who was fondly attached to her brother, mounted the walls, and anxiously watched the movements of the two armies, regardless of the fire which Biron directed toward the château.

Catherine de Medicis, willing to withdraw all that she could from the Protestant party, wrote to the Queen of Navarre in 1581, and invited her to the court of France; and Margaret, who loved change, and who had met with vexation and disappointments at Nerac, voluntarily quitted that residence. She could not, however, put any restraint upon her conduct when at the court of France, and eighteen months after her separation gave birth to a son, afterwards the confessor of the

Marchioness de Verneuil; upon which occasion, Henry III., forgetting that she was his sister and the Queen of Navarre, and that he had formerly encouraged her in her extravagant and intemperate behaviour, loaded her with reproaches and ordered her to return immediately to her husband. After receiving this rigorous command, Margaret left Paris without escort or equipage, and almost without resources, declaring that there had never been two such unhappy queens in the world as her sister-in-law Mary Stuart and herself. To add to her humiliations and grievances, her litter was stopped on the journey to Navarre by a guard of King Henry III.'s archers, and two of her maids of honour, Mesdemoiselles Bethune and Duras, were grossly insulted.

Margaret met with a cold and haughty reception from her husband, who bitterly reproached her for her disgraceful conduct when in France, and deservedly reviled her on account of the birth of her child during her visit there: by a singular fatality, that child was afterwards one of the agents of the conspiracy which shortened Henry IV.'s days. Overwhelmed with her husband's disdain, Margaret left Nerac furtively and repaired to Agen, where, to obtain a cordial reception, she announced

to the Catholics, who were numerous there, that she fled from the king because he had been excommunicated by the pope, Sixtus Quint: accordingly the town of Agen opened its gates to the queen, who made war against her husband; and Margaret, who from a religious scruple could not endure the sight of an excommunicated hero, led a most dissolute life at Agen.

At length the place was taken by Marshal de Matignon, in the year 1585, and Margaret was obliged to escape by mounting Monsieur de Lignerac's horse, upon which she fled to Auvergne; but, repulsed by the inhabitants of Carlat, she was arrested by the Marquis of Canillac, who conducted her to the fortress of Usson. In this castle she was condemned to drag on a life of captivity, although only thirty-five years of age and still beautiful. However, she was not discouraged: she made herself so agreeable to the governor, that after a short period her gaoler became her prisoner, and the Marquis de Canillac was so captivated with his captive, that she became mistress of the fortress of Usson, from which she drove the Marquis, and afterwards fortified the castle in such a manner that it was almost impregnable, and in which she remained peaceably for twenty years.

Certainly Margaret had had much to complain of in the infidelity of her husband, and it is not without astonishment, and even compassion, that a great king and the father of his people is heard to confess that he is incapable of conquering weaknesses which injure himself alone. "I do not deny," said he, "that there is much truth in the reproaches I have received respecting my love for sumptuous works, play, women, and balls, at which I may be seen with my grey beard, as vain and as much delighted at having received a ring from some pretty woman as I was in my youth; but I think I ought to be pardoned for these follies, which are no injury to my people, by way of compensation for all the troubles I experienced until I was fifty years of age."

Indeed he never was without favourites until the day of his death, and with the Bourbons commenced those contagious examples known under the specious name of gallantry. The first favourite of Henry mentioned in history is Mademoiselle Davila, sister to the historian of the same name, but improperly known under that of Dayalle; she was a Greek, and came to seek an asylum in the court of Catherine de Medicis after the massacres of Cyprus; she afterwards married an officer named

de Hemeri, one of the bravest men in the French army. The beautiful Greek was replaced by Mademoiselle de Rebours, and Henry's attentions to her at Pau in the presence of Queen Margaret were so marked, that she expressed her dissatisfaction, and bitterly complained of the conduct of Mademoiselle de Rebours. The king yielded to his wife's supplications, by obliging the favourite to quit the court: the deserted one retired to Chenonceaux, where she died shortly after.

In 1585 the King of Navarre had a son by the gardener of Aret's beautiful daughter, from whom the poet Dufresny boasts of having descended. Voltaire affirms that Louis XIV. found a great resemblance between Dufresny and Henry IV.

After the dismissal of Mademoiselle de Rebours, Henry formed an attachment for one of Margaret's maids of honour, of whom the queen was very fond. This was Frances de Montmorenci Fosseux, who was daughter of Peter I., Baron de Montmorenci, born in 1564. Frances, who was only fifteen years of age, was much flattered with the regard of her sovereign, and too weak to resist the temptations of ambition. The Duke of Alençon, who also offered her some attentions, created Henry's jealousy, which was the cause of a lasting dis-

union between these two princes, for the duke reclaimed some towns from the King of Navarre, and on Henry's refusal to yield them, commenced a campaign against him; and this quarrel, which caused much bloodshed, was called "*la guerre des amoureux.*"

Mademoiselle de Montmorenci Fosseux offended the queen by forgetting the deference which was due to her rank. Margaret, however, displayed one proof of the goodness of her heart by attending her most carefully, at the king's request, when a serious illness was the result of the birth of a son; but as soon as she was out of danger she proudly refused to see her again. The king, instead of appreciating the queen's conduct on this occasion, was weak enough to feel offended, and Margaret received many mortifications from her husband at the instigation of Mademoiselle de Montmorenci Fosseux, who proved ungrateful for the goodness she had received from her. This young lady possessed the heart of her sovereign during six years; but constancy was not amongst Henry's numerous good qualities, and Frances perceived that the Countess de Guiche had replaced her in his affections: she therefore contracted a more solid and honourable alliance in marrying Francis de Broc,

Lord of Saint Mars. The time of her death is unknown.

Diana d'Andouins, Countess de Guiche, known under the name of "*la belle Corisande*," was daughter of the Viscount Paul de Louvigny d'Andouins de Lescun, and the wife of Philibert de Grammont, Count de Guiche, governor of Bayonne, and one of Henry IV.'s most devoted servants. During the life of her husband, the countess, who possessed a firm and superior mind, determinately refused to listen to Henry's overtures, but showed her regard for him in offering most useful advice. The Count de Guiche having been killed at the siege of Fère in 1580, the king addressed most affectionate and consolatory letters to her, some of which are still preserved. In one of them he depicts the beauty of the island of Marans, the infinite number of beautiful birds which sing in its groves, and whose plumage he frequently sent to her; one of these billets finishes with these words: "Mon ame .... croyez ma fidélité être blanche et sans tache; il n'en fut jamais de pareille. Si cela vous porte contentement, vivez heureuse.—HENRI."

The promises of the good king were doubtless, as he confessed, beyond his power to maintain; for he committed a serious fault in neglecting to profit

by his advantages against Marshal de Matignon after the siege of du Catelet in 1586, by his anxiety to visit the Countess; and instead of pursuing the enemy after the victory of Coutras in 1588, he left his army, in opposition to the entreaties of the Prince de Condé, to go and lay his standards, banners, colours, and other trophies of victory at the feet of "*la belle Corisande.*"

Henry, in compliance with the urgent insinuations of the Countess de Guiche, would have procured a divorce from Margaret, and married her, had it not been for the wise and prudent advice of the strict and virtuous d'Aubigné, who obtained the king's promise to wait two years before he formed that alliance. Some time before the expiration of the two years, the king had become indifferent to her, and a relation of the Countess (the Marchioness de Parabère) ventured to point out to the king the cruelty of his conduct towards her; but Henry, whose volatile heart had flown elsewhere, was content to promise her all the friendship which she so well merited. He was faithful to his promise, and received from the Countess de Guiche many good offices on his various expeditions; for she sold her diamonds to provide the king with money, and mortgaged her

lands in order to send him the succour of 2400 Gascons, whom she armed and equipped at her own expense.

She never contracted a second alliance, and long after she had lost all personal attractions, Henry continued his correspondence with her, in which he invariably assured her of the attachment he felt for her and her family.

The Countess de Guiche died in 1620, at the age of sixty-nine, and left two children by the Count de Guiche—Antoine de Guiche, and a daughter who married Nonpar de Caumont, Count de Lauzon.

In the midst of all the corruption of the courts of France and Navarre, history affords us the names of some women truly worthy of eulogium, who preserved their faith, honour, and disinterestedness among all temptations, and whose virtue and integrity the king himself extolled and recompensed. Such were Madame de Boinville, the Countess de Guercheville, the Duchess de Never, and Catherine de Rohan.

Antoinette de Pons, Countess de Guercheville, was the wife of Henry de Silly, Count de la Roche-Guyon. When the king first beheld her during the campaign of Normandy, which occurred in

1590, two years after his accession to the throne of France, she was a widow, and living in retirement upon one of her estates with her son.

Young and handsome, she had acquired polished and elegant manners at the court of Henry III., and Henry IV. offered her his homage; doubtless Madame de Guercheville was much flattered by the king's declaration, but she was content with telling him so, and perseveringly rejected his presents and offers.

Henry, who was equally persevering, had recourse to a stratagem. Having gone with a hunting-party to the neighbourhood of Roche-Guyon, he sent a gentleman to request the countess to afford them an asylum for the night; and Madame de Guercheville warmly replied that she accepted the honour he offered her with much pleasure. Accordingly she prepared a magnificent supper, brilliantly illuminated all the rooms and windows of the château with torches, and dressed herself in superb attire; she then went to receive the sovereign at the principal gate, accompanied by her women and some gentlemen of the neighbourhood; and, after having thus courteously performed the honours of her house, she proceeded to step into her carriage and leave the château.

"What, madame," said the king, "do I drive you from your own house?"

"Sire," she replied firmly, "a king should be master of all, in whatever part of his states he may happen to be, and I leave because I fear that I may have something to refuse you here."

She accordingly left the house and passed the night with a relation at some leagues' distance. Henry, who was pleased with the countess's virtue and spirit, but disappointed at his ill success, offered her his hand, but, to his infinite astonishment, Madame de Guercheville replied, "Sire, my family is not sufficiently noble for me to be your wife, and I will not be your mistress."—"Since you are so *honourable* a lady," replied the king, "you shall be the lady of *honour* to my wife." He kept his promise, for, when he married Marie de Medicis in 1600, he named the countess her first "*dame d'honneur*," and sent her to receive the new queen at Marseilles.

Madame de Guercheville afterwards married Charles Duplessis, Count of Beaumont, Governor of Paris, and Sire of Liancourt, and the king presented the bride to her husband at the altar. The name of Liancourt she always refused to assume, because Gabrielle d'Estrées bore it for some time.

The countess lived many years at the court, where she was esteemed a model of virtue, and died at an advanced age much regretted in 1632, leaving one son, Roger Duplessis, Duke of la Roche-Guyon, a peer of France; and a daughter, Gabrielle, married to the Duke of la Rochefoucault. It was Madame de Guercheville who first introduced the *Abbé*, who afterwards became the celebrated Cardinal de Richelieu.

Soon after the refusal of the Countess de Guercheville, Marie de Beauvilliers, Abbess of Montmartre, sent to Henry IV. to demand a guard for her convent of the Benedictines of Montmartre, which was founded in 1133 by Alice of Savoy, and which, during the long siege of Paris in 1590, was incessantly intruded on by the king's soldiers, who introduced every species of disorder, and excited the inmates to reject her authority. The king granted her demand, and Marie appeared to accomplish nothing more than a simple act of duty by going to express her gratitude for his acquiescence in her wishes. Henry, who admired the beautiful young abbess, complimented her, when, forgetting her conventual habit and her vows, she replied with a tone of coquetry which encouraged him, and the monarch, although a Protestant, did

not scruple to offer his professions to Marie de Beauvilliers; he was not, however, long attached to her, for he had seen Gabrielle d'Estrées at Coeuvres, and she had made so forcible an impression on the susceptible heart of the monarch, that the easily won abbess was sent back to Montmartre, where she again assumed the reins of government at the convent. Some time after Henry added to her other titles that of Abbess des Porcherons et du Pont-aux-Dames. She lived fifty-nine years in the ruined abbey of Montmartre, for she could not persuade the king to rebuild the walls which his soldiers had destroyed. The greatest disorder prevailed in her convent in consequence, which, aided by several ecclesiastics, she at length succeeded in reforming, and died peaceably in 1657, aged eighty-three years.

Although much captivated with Gabrielle d'Estrées, Henry IV., who at first received no encouragement from her, avowed his attachment for Charlotte des Essarts, daughter of Francis des Essarts, Baron of Sautour, who was remarkable for her grace and simplicity, but had been very indifferently educated.

Before her introduction to the court, she had accompanied her aunt, the Countess of Beaumont,

wife of the ambassador of England, to that country, and on her return to France was created Countess de Romorantin by Henry IV. She had two daughters by the king, both of whom were pronounced legitimate: the eldest, Jane de Bourbon, was the Abbess of Fontevrault, and died at an extreme old age, after having done honour to the life and habit she professed by her virtues and talents; the second, Mary Henrietta, was Abbess of Chelles.

When Henry IV. had succeeded in combating the scruples of Gabrielle d'Estrées, he raised her to the post of favourite, and abandoned Mademoiselle des Essarts, who merited this desertion, having, without regard to her connection with the king, encouraged the advances of the Cardinal of Guise, Duke of Lorraine, Archbishop of Rheims, with whom she afterwards lived, and who it is said secretly married her. She had three daughters and two sons by the Cardinal, who was killed at the siege of Saint Jean d'Angeli. Her desire to legitimate these children threw her into an intrigue in 1642, the purport of which was to conciliate the king and the Guises. But she acted unskilfully, and was moreover deceived by false friends, who betrayed her confidence; and, after the treaty

of Saint Germain, she was disgraced, and obliged to reside on one of her estates, by the cardinal minister, Duke de Richelieu. Her banishment from court and the defeat of her projects for the legitimacy of her children caused her much chagrin, and she died in isolation and exile at the age of eighty in 1651.

Of all Henry IV.'s favourites Gabrielle d'Estrées was the most celebrated. She was daughter of Antony d'Estrées, Marquis of Coeuvres, and was born at the Château de Coeuvres in 1574. The females of her family were remarkable for their beauty, but Gabrielle surpassed them all.

The authors and poets of her time celebrated her beauty even after her death. Her head was ornamented with a great profusion of fair hair her deep blue eyes were fringed with long silken lashes, and arched with a finely pencilled eyebrow; her delicate and rosy mouth displayed a fine set of pearly teeth, and her smile betokened sweetness and graciousness; her form was elegant, and, as she gracefully moved along through groups of admirers, a tiny and well-shaped foot appeared from beneath her becoming robes. All her other attractions accorded with the fascinating ensemble, and the painters and sculptors of the time con-

sidered Gabrielle the most perfect model that had ever been offered to their art. The impression which her attractions produced upon the generations who succeeded her may be imagined on reading the tribute which Voltaire has rendered to the memory of this celebrated woman in his poem entitled the 'Henriade.'

"D'Estrées était son nom ; la main de la nature
De ses aimables dons la combla sans mesure.
Telle ne brillait point aux bords de l'Eurotas
La coupable beauté qui trahit Ménélas.
Moins touchante et moins belle, à Tharse on vit paraître
Celle qui des Romains avait dompté le maître,
Lorsque les habitans des rives du Cydnus,
L'encensoir à la main, la prirent pour Vénus."

Her father, the Marquis d'Estrées, who perceived the dangers and seductions with which Gabrielle was surrounded, carefully watched over her, and endeavoured to inculcate rigid and severe principles of morality into her mind ; but although she was only thirteen years of age, she was well acquainted with her charms : moreover, she had been brought up in a convent, which is not always the asylum of virtue.

Previous to her introduction to Henry, Gabrielle had formed an attachment for the Count de Bellegarde, Grand Ecuyer of France, an amiable and

agreeable young nobleman, who would no doubt have married her and preserved her honour, if he had not had the folly to boast of her beauty to the king, who had never seen her. Being at Senlis in the king's apartments when Henry was extolling the beauty of Marie de Beauvilliers, he laughingly informed him that the lady of his love (Gabrielle d'Estrées) was far more beautiful than his mistress, upon which the king resolved to go with Bellegarde to see the boasted beauty, and from that time the Grand Ecuyer was obliged to sacrifice her. In fact, after his first visit to Coeuvres in 1590, Henry was desirous of remaining there, but glory called him away to conquest.

Gabrielle, during the king's absence, rejected the offers of Henry Orleans, Duke of Longueville; and, still attached to the Duke of Bellegarde, continued to receive his visits, while Henry was busily engaged in the war.

At length the conqueror of Tori, who had nourished the passion with which the beautiful Gabrielle had inspired him, on his first moment of leisure flew to Mantes, where she was, and was not long in discovering her attachment for the Grand Ecuyer. Henry, forgetting his dignity, conducted himself with great violence towards Bellegarde, and ordered

him to renounce her. The despairing lover could not avoid expressing some well-founded reproaches for the cruelty and tyranny of this order; and, seeing that her tears were vain, Mademoiselle d'Estrées left Mantes for the Château de Coeuvres, where she found herself safe from the king, who wished to do violence to her heart, and take her affections by storm.

Henry IV., whom Gabrielle used to call "*mon soldat*," gave himself up to a most weak and puerile despair; history justly reproaches him with having abandoned his army, to which his presence was most necessary, and, accompanied by only five gentlemen, passed several corps of the enemy at night, in order to proceed to the dwelling of the object of his passion, for whom, at that moment, he would have compromised the destinies of France. When the king had arrived at Coeuvres his danger of discovery was so imminent that he was obliged to borrow a peasant's dress, and, loaded with a bundle of straw, he arrived on foot at the château. Gabrielle, who was not pleased at the sight of the king, whom she did not love, and finding no attraction in him when equipped in this unfavourable disguise, received him so badly that her sister, the Marchioness de Villars-Brancas, was obliged to offer apologies and excuses for her. The young girl, notwithstanding, rudely

quitted the king, which was all the recompense he received for the dangerous excursion he had made for her.

On his return Henry was much more warmly welcomed by his troops than he had been by his mistress: they were quite rejoiced at the danger he had escaped, and his virtuous friends, Sully and Mornay, again gave him their wise and serious advice, which he was so apt to forget.

On a similar occasion his absence caused the escape of the Duke of Parma, who crossed the Seine at Caudebec, but for which circumstance his retreat would have been impossible. At length, to bring Gabrielle to Mantes, the king sent for the Marquis d'Estrées, who had hardly arrived there before the fortune of war required Henry's presence elsewhere. Freed from the monarch's attentions, Gabrielle again received Bellegarde's visits with joy. He was not only much younger than the king, but much more handsome; he had a noble head, soft and intelligent eyes, and a martial deportment.

The Duke of Longueville, who had for some time previously corresponded with Gabrielle, feared to offend his sovereign by the continuation of an intimacy which might bring on him his resentment, and consequently requested Gabrielle to restore him all

the letters he had written to her. Mademoiselle d'Estrées, who had never loved him, acceded to his wish upon the fair condition that he would also return all her correspondence to him ; but the duke, from either self-love, or a desire to preserve one of these precious documents, withheld one which was written in a somewhat impassioned style ; the vindictive Gabrielle, who had faithfully performed her part of the agreement, never pardoned her lover's perfidy, and the Duke of Longueville, on entering Doullens, was struck by a ball in the midst of a volley which was fired in his honour.

The anxious father, who foresaw the intrigues and temptations that were gathering round Gabrielle, and thinking that all his vigilance could not preserve her, resolved to marry her to Nicholas d'Amerval, Lord of Liancourt, who was rich, but possessed of little talent.

Gabrielle, who was only sixteen years of age, vainly refused this marriage ; her father insisted on it, and she thought that nothing but royal power could interfere to prevent the union : she therefore begged the protection of the king, who was persuaded that her renunciation of Liancourt arose from her love for him : he could not prevent the celebration of her marriage, but he desired Monsieur

de Liancourt to repair immediately to the army. The disappointed husband was obliged to obey this order, and the king took Gabrielle with him to the siege of Saint-Quentin. This siege lasted some time, and Gabrielle had no female society while there but her sister, Madame de Villars; her cousin, Mademoiselle de la Bourdoisière; and her aunt, the Marchioness de Sourdis, who accompanied her for the purpose of giving her intriguing and ambitious counsel for the elevation of her relatives; she did not waste her advice, for Saint-Quentin was taken in 1591, and the Marquis de Sourdis was appointed governor.

Gabrielle is not altogether free from reproach in regard of her conduct with her former lover, the Duke of Bellegarde, if the circumstances of the adventure which has been produced by Beaumarchais, in one of the most clever and satirical pieces which the French stage affords, are correct.

Mademoiselle d'Estrées was very extravagant, and her access to the king's coffers gave her ample opportunity for satisfying her caprices. At the ceremony of the baptism of one of her sons in 1594, she appeared in a dress which was loaded with precious stones, and carried in her hand a pocket-handkerchief which cost nineteen hundred crowns.

Gabrielle has been accused of having poisoned d'Allibour, the king's doctor, but the statement is without foundation.

If Mademoiselle d'Estrées' taste and age differed from Henry's, and she did not really love him, she nevertheless triumphed in the glory of that hero, and was proud of her children, the royal offspring of so great a king. She constantly persuaded him to renounce Calvinism for the interests of his crown, and assisted in 1593 at the ceremony of his abjuration, which took place at Saint-Denis.

Henry, who considered no sacrifice too great for this idolized favourite, wished that all persons should do homage to her; and, had not Margaret de Valois so obstinately resisted the divorce, he would have completed Gabrielle's glory by placing the double diadem of France and Navarre upon her brow.

In 1594 she gave birth to Cæsar Duke of Vendôme, at the Château de Coucy, in Picardy; in 1595 the king created her Marchioness de Monceaux; and afterwards declared his son Cæsar legitimate by the following proclamation:—

"Henri, par le grâce de Dieu, Roi de France et de Navarre, &c.

"Puisque Dieu n'a pas encore permis que nous en

ayons (lignée) en légitime mariage, pour être la reine, notre épouse, depuis dix ans séparée de nous, nous avons voulu, en attendant qu'il nous veuille donner des enfans qui puissent légitimement succéder à cette couronne, rechercher d'en avoir d'ailleurs en quelque lieu digne et honorable - - - - Pour cette occasion, ayant reconnu les grandes grâces et perfection, tant de l'esprit que du corps, qui se trouvent en la personne de notre tres-chère et bien-aimée la dame Gabrielle d'Estrées, nous l'avons depuis quelques années recherchée à cet effet comme le sujet que nous avons jugé et connu le plus digne de notre amitié. - - - - - -

"Et s'étant, la dite dame, après nos longues poursuites, et ce que nous y avons apporté d'autorité, condescendue à nous obéir et complaire, et ayant plu à Dieu nous donner puis naguères en elle un fils, qui a jusqu'à présent porté le nom de César - - - - avouons, disons, et déclarons, par ces présentes, signées de notre main, le dit César notre fils naturel, et ici lui légitimé et légitimons. - - - Donné à Paris, au mois de Janvier, l'an de grâce quinze cent quatre-vingt-quinze, et de notre règne le sixième.—HENRI."

In order to set aside all obstacles which might impede her elevation to the throne, Mademoiselle d'Estrées contrived to get her marriage with Mon-

sieur de Liancourt annulled through the favour she obtained from the Pope for using her influence towards Henry's conversion.

She assumed all the pomp of a queen, took her place beside the king in the council-chamber, and advised with him respecting the affairs of state. She shared the glory of his triumphs and his victories, was admitted into all the most brilliant solemnities, of which she was the ornament, and accompanied him to the assembly of the state at Rouen in 1596.

Henry was always delighted to avow his affection and confidence in her. "Je l'appelle auprès de moi comme une personne confidente, pour lui pouvoir communiquer mes secrets, et sur iceux recevoir une familière et douce consolation."

As Margaret's refusal to consent to the divorce was the only barrier between Gabrielle and the throne, she looked forward with certainty to overcoming that difficulty, and politically endeavoured to appear worthy of the expected honour, by gaining the esteem of the people.

The choice of a superintendent of finances, which was a question requiring most important consideration, and one which greatly influenced the destinies of France, was disputed at Monceaux, and the decision was referred to Mademoiselle d'Estrées, who

merits the acknowledgment of her country, in having chosen the exemplary Sully, who was well known to be indifferent to the fair sex, and very severe in his notions respecting the king's favourites: his asperity in regard of Gabrielle and her extravagances was most particular.

Henry spent all his leisure time with the royal favourite, who resided in the Hôtel de Schomberg, in the Rue Saint Honoré, on the spot where the Oratory now stands: it was there, nine months after his triumphal entry into Paris, on arriving in haste to see Gabrielle after the campaign of Picardy, that in stooping to receive a petition offered him, he was stabbed by Jean Chatel; fortunately, however, his wound was slight. It was at her château of Monceaux that he accepted the forced submission of the most powerful and seditious of his enemies, the duke of Mayenne; and at that residence also, in a serious attack of indisposition, he received such assiduous care and attention from Gabrielle, that he still persisted in his resolution of marrying her.

She daily obtained more influence over the monarch, and as her power increased she could less endure the thoughts of a rival: her cousin Mademoiselle de Harancourt gave her some umbrage, and she dismissed her from the court, as also

Mademoiselle de Senantes, of whom she was jealous: she also formed an aversion for Sully, because he objected to the king's union with her.

Henry IV., as was usual with him, opened his heart to Sully on that subject, but with a hesitation which marked the combat between love and reason; knowing, probably, that his devoted friend and servant would disapprove of his design. He commenced by detailing the qualities he required in a wife, and demanded so many merits, that the minister declared he thought it impossible to find such perfection in woman.

"And what will you say," said the king, "if I were to name one?"

"I should say," replied the confidant, "that your majesty must have been on very intimate terms with her, to be certain that you have not overrated her numerous good qualities."

"As you will," said the king; "but if you cannot recommend me a wife, I will name the one I allude to."

"Name her, then, Sire," replied Sully; "for I cannot myself guess."

"Oh! you cunning rogue," replied Henry, archly; "you could very well name her of whom I am thinking, if you chose it! for you have often avowed

that all those good qualities are centred in my mistress: not," added he, "that I mean to say that I intend to marry her, but only to know what you would say, if, in failure of finding another, I should one day take such a thing into my head."

"I should say, Sire," answered the minister, very gravely, "that your majesty, not being acquainted with a more suitable woman than the Marchioness de Monceaux, by whom to secure children to the state, and from the fear of depriving your kingdom of so desirable a benefit, would forget the important considerations due to your royal person and dignity."

Sully then adduced other reasons to persuade him to alter his design, the principal of which was, that he would be embarrassed in regard of his children born before his marriage with Gabrielle and his divorce from Margaret. "Of course," continued the minister, "the younger children would be heirs to the throne, to the detriment of the elder; and from that will spring cruel wars between the brothers; wars which will perhaps replunge the state into a worse condition than that from which you have preserved it." This conversation made some impression on the mind of Henry, but he did not, however, forego his project.

The birth of her third child, Alexander, caused a quarrel between Henry and Gabrielle, whom the king had created duchess of Beaufort. The duchess, always flattering herself with the hope of becoming queen, considered that her children's succession to the throne was certain, and surrounded them with such attendants and pomp as belong to royalty only, as if to accustom the nation to look upon them as their future masters. In consequence of these pretensions, she determined on baptizing her son with the magnificence usual to the royal children, and not only gave orders for a most extravagant outlay, but added to the young prince's name in the register the qualification of a son of France; and Alexander was presented at the baptismal font by Madame Catherine, the king's sister, and the Count de Soissons.

Sully, whose duty it was to regulate the expenses of this ceremony, was indignant at the prodigality of Gabrielle, and refused to pay the accounts, which were considered debts of state, until the child's title as Prince Royal was effaced from the register, at which the favourite was so incensed that she resolved on disgracing the minister for ever. She made bitter complaints to the king, who, to endeavour to reconcile them, conducted Sully to

the duchess's apartments, having previously requested her to receive him kindly. The enraged Gabrielle would not listen to reason, but loaded the superintendent with invectives in the presence of the king. Henry for the first time reproached her, when she threw herself on a couch, and said plainly, that she would starve herself to death, since she had experienced the shame of seeing the king take the part of his valet, in opposition to her.

"A valet! Ah! by my faith, Madame, that is too much," cried Henry, whose anger was vividly aroused; "that is too much, and I see plainly that you wish me to dismiss a minister who is invaluable to me; but I swear to you that I will do no such a thing; and more, I declare that if I am reduced to the necessity of losing either, I prefer *one servant* such as he is, to *ten mistresses* like you." At the same moment the king turned to leave the room, but Gabrielle, who saw that she had greatly offended him, threw herself at his feet, and Henry, at the entreaty of Sully, became reconciled to her.

The king was enjoying the sweets of repose with Gabrielle, when he received news of the unfortunate surprise of Amiens by the Spaniards, and he immediately left Paris for that town, accompanied by the duchess of Beaufort, who was present at the

ensuing siege. The grand master of artillery, Epinay de Saint Luc, having been killed on the field of battle, Gabrielle immediately demanded the vacant post for her father; but Henry did not like the Marquis d'Estrées, and alleged that officer's advanced age as the cause of his refusal. Gabrielle burst into tears, and vowed henceforward to devote her life to the cloister; and Henry at once gave the marquis the appointment.

The army requiring all the attention of its commander, the monarch, at the request of his officers, sent Gabrielle to Paris, and brilliant success soon followed this generous resolution, for the treaty of Vervins, in 1599, sealed a glorious peace for France.

The duke of Mercoeur, one of Henry IV.'s most powerful enemies, had not yet declared his submission, which he wished to negotiate through the duchess of Beaufort, offering her as recompense the hand of his only daughter, the richest heiress in France, for her son Cæsar, duke of Vendôme. This negotiation succeeded, and the ceremony of the betrothing of the young prince and Mademoiselle de Mercoeur, both of whom were very young, was performed by the Cardinal Tayeuse.

Margaret de Valois, either from motives of jealousy or disappointment, still refused to consent

to the divorce. Although that queen's conduct could leave her no pretensions to the heart of her husband, she nevertheless hated his favourite, and, without remembering the recriminations which her licentious behaviour authorised against herself, never spoke of Gabrielle without adding to her name those withering epithets which are invariably bestowed upon vice, in however elevated a situation it may be found.

Nevertheless Henry, vexed at the delay which attended the rupture of his marriage at the court of Rome, menaced the sovereign pontiff Clement VIII. to make him commence a process against the queen for adultery. The proofs were not wanting, and all persons knew that the result of it would be the elevation of the duchess of Beaufort to the throne.

The pope, however, constantly found pretexts for retarding it, and the king's ambassadors, Siller and Ossat, who were partisans of Gabrielle, at length declared to the pontiff, that if he was not more zealous in acceding to the king's wishes, that he would act without his concurrence. Clement accordingly ordered fasts and prayers, and one day, after a profound meditation, exclaimed, "*Dieu y a pourvu.*" The divorce was therefore expedited: but Gabrielle was never destined for the throne.

The duchess of Beaufort's death is accompanied with circumstances which render it very singular. At first she had presentiments and interior warnings, the cause of which no person could penetrate, and which have never been explained. These sinister presages, which obscured her days and troubled her repose at night, were doubtless caused by the predictions of the divinators and astrologers who frequented the court, and were entertained by all queens and princesses at that period. She lost her cheerfulness, her imagination became afflicted, she had frightful dreams, and, on awaking, her woman would often find her bathed in tears.

The king being at Fontainebleau, religious scruples required Gabrielle to leave him, in order to spend the Easter at Paris. As she was pregnant with her fourth child, Henry thought that she would perform the journey with less risk by water, and conducted her to Melun, where she embarked. On a hundred previous occasions she had left the monarch for longer periods and greater distances without experiencing the agitation that tormented her at that time; but then, sad and melancholy, she embraced him with affection, and repeated her adieux with tearful eyes; she earnestly recommended her children to his care, conjuring him to

protect them, and, once more throwing herself into his arms, bade him a mournful farewell. It was their last parting.

She arrived at Paris on the eve of Good Friday, in 1599, and disembarked at the Arsenal, at Zamet's hôtel, which was her usual residence when she made a short visit to the capital. Zamet provided a brilliant repast for the duchess, in which were all her favourite dishes. La Varenne, who was an intimate friend of the king, and who accompanied the duchess, wrote to Sully that she had dined with appetite: "Qu'on la traita des viandes les plus friandes et les plus délicates que son hôte savait être le plus selon son goût; ce que vous remarquerez selon votre prudence, dit la Varenne, car la mienne n'est pas assez excellente pour présumer des choses dont il ne m'est pas apparu:" which remark gives rise to suspicions, though ambiguously offered, that Gabrielle did not come by her end fairly.

After rising from the table, she expressed her wish to leave that house, and went, accompanied by La Varenne, Mademoiselle Guise, and others, to attend evening service at the Petit-Saint-Antoine. Before quitting the church she felt unwell, and, supported by Mademoiselle Guise, requested to be conducted to her aunt, Madame de Sourdis, at the cloister of

Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, declaring that she would not return to Zamet's. On arriving at her aunt's she fell into horrible convulsions, and several times attempted to write to the king, but the agony she felt caused the pen to fall from her fingers. At length she gave birth to a still-born child, and expired twenty-four hours after in dreadful torture; the contraction of her features, from pain, disfigured her so completely, that her countenance could not be recognised.

On receiving the news of her illness, the king mounted his horse and set off at great speed towards Paris, but Marshal d'Ornario and others, who met him on the road, informed him of Gabrielle's frightful end, and entreated him to return to Fontainebleau. The king's grief amounted to despair; he assumed deep mourning, and directed the court to do the same: but though as a lover he bewailed her loss, as monarch he forgot her; the wise remonstrances of his friends consoled him, and in less than a month he was beyond their consolations, for he loved, after his fashion, Mademoiselle d'Entraigues.

The parliament sent a deputation offering the king their condolences on the event of the duchess of Beaufort's death, and royal honours were bestowed on her remains. She had four children: Cæsar, duke

of Vendôme; Alexander, grand prior of France; the duchess d'Elbeuf, and a fourth who was still-born. In the year 1820 a statue was erected in the department of Aisne to the memory of this celebrated favourite.

While Gabrielle was reigning over the court and the heart of Henry IV., Margaret de Valois was daily devising the most agreeable methods of lightening her captivity. Nevertheless the Château d'Usson was the theatre of vexation as well as pleasure, for on several occasions her little garrison, which was but indifferently supplied with means, became a prey to discontent. In this critical situation, Margaret developed the energy of her character, and showed herself capable of better things than her conduct usually gave her credit for. In 1590, to quiet the most mutinous, she sold her plate, diamonds, and other valuables to supply their wants, and in the midst of the struggle against reverses and misfortunes, and the voluntary exile in which she consumed the last of her best days, Margaret had not even the consolation of thinking that the merit of her privations and sacrifices could efface the memory of the motive which called for them.

At length, Henry IV. having entered Paris as conqueror in 1594, Margaret became queen of

France, but the shame which her conduct had brought upon her prevented her wearing the double diadem of France and Navarre. Henry declared he would never restore her to liberty till she would consent to renounce her title to the supreme rank; and Margaret, who hated the favourite, preferred her dull life at the Château d'Usson to the elevation of her rival, and, notwithstanding the most urgent solicitations, persisted in her refusal.

After the melancholy end of Gabrielle d'Estrées, being tired of her captivity, she sent the king her consent to the rupture of their marriage; and Clement VIII. having permitted the divorce, because she was in the third degree related to him, and also because their marriage had been forced by Charles IX., the separation was pronounced by the Cardinal de Tayeuse, the archbishop of Arles, and the bishop of Modena, in the name of the sovereign pontiff, in 1599, one year before Mary de Medicis left Florence to share the throne of France with Henry the Great.

Margaret's consent to the divorce did not immediately procure her liberty, and it was not until she had participated in the discovery of the Count of Auvergne's conspiracy that she was permitted to visit Paris, when, glad to leave Usson at any price,

she addressed a letter to the king, containing expressions of the most servile flattery, which were quite inexcusable; and, after a captivity of twenty years, appeared at the court of France in 1605, to render homage and assist at the entertainments of the new queen, where, insensible to all affronts, she thought of nothing but pleasure.

After having lived for some time at the Château of Madrid, in the Bois de Boulogne, she removed to the Hôtel de Sens, near the church of St. Paul, in Paris; not that the king refused this royal daughter of France an asylum in his palace, but Margaret preferred to live apart from her family, in the midst of the isolated gardens of the Hôtel de Sens, where she could more freely indulge in her profligate intrigues. This degraded queen did not long remain in that residence, having been obliged to quit it on account of the death of one of her lovers named Datte, who was shot there in her presence; and this event, with the circumstances attached to it, rendered the hôtel so odious to her that she would no longer remain in it. She accordingly removed to the faubourg Saint Germain in 1608, and purchased an hôtel situated in the Pré-aux-Clercs, where she laid out large gardens on the banks of the river, and founded the convent of the Petits-

Augustins; an establishment as frivolous as her own character. One of the clauses in the arrangement of this monastery was, that the inmates should possess fine voices, and sing hymns to the modern airs which she herself selected; and she passed a great portion of her time in her bed, surrounded by the children of the choir, whom she instructed in this species of sacred harmony.

The greatest luxury and opulence reigned in this hôtel. Henry IV. permitted her to retain the title of queen, but Margaret was quite unworthy of that honour. Her court was composed of cavaliers, poets, and musicians; she received the learned at her table, cultivated literature with success, bestowed large alms on numerous poor persons, and ruined her creditors, who suffered for her prodigality. At the age of fifty-five she danced so well, that, according to Saint-Foix, Don John of Austria, governor of the Low Countries, went to Paris for the purpose of seeing the first dancer in Europe exhibit at a ball. Thus, wreathing garlands of roses with her silver hairs, Margaret passed her nights in festivity, and her days in eternising the memories of her numerous lovers in poems and memoirs. An historian informs us that this queen "portait un grand vertugadin qui avait des pochettes

tout autour, en chacune desquelles elle mettait une boîte où était le cœur d'un de ses favoris trépassés."

In the year 1610, when celebrating the day of her birth by an elegant entertainment, Margaret received intelligence of the assassination of Henry IV.: the news did not much affect her, but her insensibility at the king's death was not to be compared to that of her successor, the reigning queen, Mary de Medicis.

Towards the end of her life Margaret's faculties were much impaired; she became hypochondriacal, and subject to convulsions of terror, caused by the recollection of the many tragical situations in which she had been placed: perhaps also her dissolute life, and the near prospect of the future to which she was hastening, created feelings of alarm and remorse.

She died at the hôtel of the faubourg Saint Germain, in 1615, at the age of sixty-three: her body was placed in the church of the Augustins, which she had founded, and was afterwards interred in the vault of the Valois at the cathedral of Saint Denis.

QUEEN AND REGENT MARY DE MEDICIS.

When Henry IV. had resolved on re-marrying, several princesses were proposed for him: amongst others, the Infanta of Spain, daughter of Philip II.; Margaret of Lorraine, Princess of Conti; and Henry's cousin, the Princess of Rohan: but his marriage was not negotiated with either.

Shortly after the death of Gabrielle d'Estrées, the king attached himself to Mademoiselle d'Entraigues, who, ambitious and artful, conceived the project of a marriage with him, which, but for the excellent advice of his minister Sully, would doubtless have taken place. Knowing his predominant weakness, and unwilling to lose the precious moments which the chance of winning the heart of the king offered her, Mademoiselle d'Entraigues went with her father and mother to Fontainebleau shortly after the death of the duchess of Beaufort. This lady was the daughter of Marie Touchet and Francis de Balzac, lord of Entraigues, and, though much less beautiful than Gabrielle, had studied from her childhood the art of pleasing, and possessed an air of coquetry which gave a charm to her smallest

attractions; she was intellectual and spirited, but satirical, violent, and jealous; her mother, notwithstanding her affectation of virtue, seconded her ambitious views and favoured her intrigue. She attracted the monarch to Malesherbes, her place of residence, where Henrietta d'Entraigues employed all her arts of dissimulation. The king's visits were at first encouraged, and when she believed herself sure of conquest, under the pretext of her objection to mortify and incense a rigid parent, she rendered their interviews more difficult, so that the monarch, as on a former occasion, had recourse to clandestine and dangerous visits in disguise. She then left Malesherbes for the Château de Marcoussis, where Henry followed her; and she at length had the audacity to require, as the price of her virtue, the sum of one hundred thousand crowns, and a promise of marriage, if in the course of the year she gave birth to a son, which demand the king had the weakness to agree to, and sign.

Henry, as usual, consulted his sincere friend Sully on the occasion, and the minister requested time to reflect upon an affair of so much consequence. "Speak freely," said the king; "I wish it; I command it."

"You wish me to speak, Sire," replied Sully,

"but will you promise me not to be displeased at what I may say or do?"

"Yes, yes; I do," said Henry; upon which Sully, taking the document of promise in his hand, tore it in two pieces, and added, "This is my advice, Sire, since you desire to know it."

"Are you mad?" exclaimed the monarch.

"Possibly, Sire," said Sully, "and I wish to God that I were the only madman in France." The minister then retired, and, wishing to give his master a lesson in economy, brought in to the king's cabinet the sum of five hundred thousand francs, which he spread before his eyes, when Henry could not help avowing that he had paid dearly for his mistress's favours. Sully, who was really interested in the honour of his master and the welfare of the kingdom, then represented to him the danger of such an engagement; and Henry, who listened like a man that was conscious of his error, made no reply: after some moments of thought, as if drawn by some invincible power, he retired to his inner cabinet, wrote out another promise of marriage, and then went to hunt in the direction of Malesherbes, where those pleasures awaited him which afterwards cost him many corroding cares.

If the weakness of the unfortunate monarch can-

not be excused, the noble and persevering confidence which he preserved for his upright and virtuous minister deserves at least admiration. Sully thought he would have been disgraced after this conversation, because the king did not look at or speak to him on leaving his cabinet; but it was conscious shame on the part of the monarch, as he avowed himself afterwards, in giving him the appointment of grand master of artillery.

Henry IV. was not without remorse and scruple for his faults. "I daily pray to God," said he to his historian Mathieu, "to grant me a victory over my passions, and, above all, over sensuality." If that petition had been granted him, or rather, if Henry had followed his prayers by striving against his besetting sins, he would have prevented the numerous troubles which were caused him by Henrietta d'Entraigues and her family.

This woman was his very scourge. By turns capricious or caressing, flattering or disdainful, criminal or repentant, but never faithful, she appeared to hold the monarch's heart in her hand, to swell it with disappointment, to inflame it with hatred, or to distract it with the frenzy of the most violent love. Instead of enjoying with her, as with Gabrielle, the pleasures of mutual confidence, Henry

found her always opposed to him in sentiments, desires, and interests, so that he was obliged to be as much on his guard with her as with an enemy. She never considered herself sufficiently remunerated, having demanded the abbey of Chelles, after having been created Marchioness de Verneuil and received the domain of that name.

Fearing the king's inconstancy, she was desirous of accompanying him in his expedition to Piedmont in 1600, but Henry commanded her to remain at Lyon, where, to console her disappointment, he shortly after sent her the colours taken from the Duke of Savoy. This royal gallantry flattered the pride of the Marchioness, who believed herself still nearer the throne than the duchess of Beaufort had been. But she deceived herself; for Sully had already terminated the negotiations for Henry IV.'s marriage with Mary de Medicis.

When the Marchioness de Verneuil was informed of the conclusion of this engagement, she gave loose to the most violent invectives of anger, which caused the birth of a still-born son. During her indisposition the king paid her most assiduous attentions, and when her health was quite re-established, she called upon him to marry her, according to his engagement. Fortunately the interest

of the state was dearer to Henry than the Marchioness, for he married Mary de Medicis, in 1600.

This princess was the daughter of Francis II., grand-duke of Tuscany, and of Jane of Austria; she was twenty-six years of age when Henry sent his ambassadors, Sillery and Ossat, to Florence to ask her hand in marriage. Mary's figure was tall, and her countenance handsome; she had a kind and generous heart, and an intellectual and penetrating mind; but these advantages were impaired by an inordinate share of vanity and an excessive degree of obstinacy.

By the marriage contract the grand-duke Francis II. gave his daughter for her dower six hundred thousand crowns, and a quantity of superb diamonds and precious stones, as also all the debts which Henry IV. owed him. After the signature of this document the grand-duke paid the usual honour to Mary as queen of France, and gave magnificent entertainments at the court of Tuscany to celebrate this glorious event.

The war which still existed between France and Savoy prevented the princess's immediate departure, during which delay she diligently studied the French language.

At length the Duke of Bellegarde, Grand Ecuyer of France, accompanied by forty noblemen, arrived at Florence, where they were received by the grand-duke himself and his court. The ceremony of espousing by proxy was performed in the cathedral by the pope's legate, Cardinal Aldobrandini, after which Mary embarked at Leghorn in a superb galley, escorted by a flotilla of seventeen vessels, and sailed for Marseilles, accompanied by her aunt, Elizabeth de Medicis, grand-duchess of Florence, her sister the Duchess of Mantua, and Virginia des Ursins. The vessel in which she performed the voyage was fitted with the greatest richness and prodigality, decorated with superb tapestry of satin and gold embroidery, ornamented within and without with jewels and pearls, and the escutcheon of the house of Medicis was traced in diamonds. Violent and contrary winds rendered the voyage perilous, but Mary displayed no alarm, and appeared worthy of the hero she had the honour of being allied to. The Constable de Montmorenci, the Chancellor Bellièvre, the Cardinals de Tayeuse, de Gondi, de Givry, and de Sourdis, as well as the Dukes of Ventadour, Nemours, and Guise, went to receive the queen at Marseilles; and amongst the ladies were the Princess of Conti and Madame de

Guercheville. The papal town of Avignon welcomed Mary de Medicis with the greatest magnificence, and three beautiful young girls, representing the Graces, offered her the keys of the town. She next proceeded to Lyon, where her royal husband was to meet her, and where she remained eight days, he being detained at the besieging of the fortress of Sainte Catherine.

Notwithstanding the fatigues he had undergone, Henry on his arrival, before changing his dress, repaired to the apartment of the queen: on his entrance she knelt to him, and the king with his natural affability raised and embraced her; the same day the marriage ceremony was performed in the cathedral of Lyon by the Cardinal Aldobrandini. Three months after, the queen made her solemn entry into Paris amidst the joyful acclamations of the people.

Henry IV., who was an object of veneration to all Europe, and who had restored peace to France, could not find it in the bosom of his family. His numerous infidelities and the queen's jealous and haughty temper were the principal causes of his domestic dissensions. Although Mary professed attachment for her husband, she often forgot that he was king in the violent expressions of anger

which her jealousy gave rise to. But Henry, who had never been jealous of Margaret de Valois, was still less so of Mary de Medicis, who, according to the Count de Caylus, notwithstanding her apparent stateliness, was attached to Richelieu, bishop of Luçon, whom she promoted to the first ecclesiastical dignities; as also to Concini, whom she married to her favourite Leonora Galigaï.

Shortly after his marriage, the king, to appease the Marchioness de Verneuil, left the queen, and went to her château; and Mary, deeply sensible of the affront, vainly demanded the dismissal of the favourite, who employed the arts of her charms and malice in opposition to the discontent and cold beauty of the queen.

According to the etiquette of the court, the Marchioness de Verneuil was presented to the queen by the Duchess of Nemours; but although Mary received her graciously, she insisted on having Leonora Galigaï as her dame d'atour, in opposition to the wishes of the king; nevertheless Henrietta did not oppose it, as she also received apartments in the Louvre.

This reciprocity of services could not, however, form a durable alliance between such incompatible elements. Although Henry did justice to the

beauty of his queen, he preferred the society of the marchioness, whose court at the Louvre rivalled that of Mary de Medicis, who on her part could not endure to be offended in so public a manner. Leonora endeavoured to calm her mistress, and reconcile all parties, but the queen and the marchioness gave birth to sons within a few days of each other, which caused fresh resentment on one side, and new raillery on the other. The dauphin, afterwards Louis XIII., was born first, in 1601; and twenty days after, the marchioness gave birth to Gaston Henry de Bourbon, duke of Verneuil.

Fifty-eight years had elapsed since the birth of a dauphin had occurred in France, the last having been Francis II., and this circumstance gave great joy to Henry; but his happiness did not prevent him from yielding to the caprices of love.

The queen incessantly complained of the insolence of the marchioness, and sometimes suffered her humour to lead her so far as to threaten the lives of her rivals, and above all Henrietta, whom she hated, and who in her turn revenged herself by petty insults, imitating Mary de Medecis' tone, gestures, and Italian accent: the king laughed at these absurdities, but the queen was furious, and

demanded vengeance. Henry endeavoured to elude it, not wishing follies which were committed to amuse him to be treated seriously; but Mary insisted, and, seeing that the king could not hear of parting with Henrietta, believed that he preferred her, and gave vent in public to reproaches, and scenes of ill humour and vexation, that sensibly affected the monarch. Henrietta did everything to multiply those scenes, hoping that the queen's violence would annoy the king so much as to induce him to send her back to Florence, and flattering herself that there would then be no impediment between herself and the throne, or to her son's being acknowledged as dauphin.

Upon one occasion she declared in the queen's presence that she only became a mother under a promise of marriage, and Mary in a fit of passion at her audacious remark raised her hand and would have struck the king, if Sully, who was witness to the quarrel, had not restrained her arm, for which the queen accused the loyal servant of having insulted her. These interior discords were so frequently repeated, that Henry several times threatened to send the queen, and her favourite Concini and his wife, Leonora Galigaï, to Florence.

But the arrogance of the Marchioness de Ver-

neuil gained her numerous enemies, amongst others Gabrielle's sister-in-law, Julia d'Estrées, wife of George Brancas Villars, who projected her fall; and the queen, whose proud heart was wounded, encouraged all complaints against her. Madame Villars, who succeeded in obtaining the correspondence of the Marchioness and the Duke de Joinville, demanded a private interview with the king, in which she communicated to him the circumstances of their connexion, and laid the correspondence before him. The irritated king sent it to the Marchioness by the Count de Lude, accompanied by the most bitter reproaches: but Henrietta was not disconcerted, although her deception and infidelity were so apparent; she contrived to justify herself in the eyes of her lover; Madame Villars was exiled, and, to console the Marchioness de Verneuil, Henry presented her with six thousand livres.

At length the queen proved so clearly the infidelity of the marchioness, that Henry, thinking himself not less free, formed other attachments, amongst which were Mademoiselle de Sourdis and the Countesses de Moret and de Limoux. He also offered his homage to Mademoiselle de Guise, and the Duchesses de Montpensier and Nevers,

but the prudent and virtuous refusal of those ladies induced the king to return to the profligate Henrietta d'Entraigues.

Henry having been indisposed for some time, this crafty and ambitious woman expressed to him her fears that, in case of his death, herself and children would fall into the power of the queen, and obtained his permission to retire to Cambrai, which was then in the power of the Spaniards. *There* she could more conveniently conspire with the enemies of France; and Balthazar de Zuniga, the Spanish ambassador, was her partner in the plot to revive the promise which had been extorted from Henry, to annul the marriage of the queen, and place herself on the throne.

During her absence, Henry found consolation in the society of her sister Mariette d'Entraigues, who was much more amiable than herself. He corresponded with her, made her magnificent presents, and invited her to court, but her father refused to suffer her to go. Whether it was that Henry found a charm in her conversation, or that he drew from her the plots of her family, is uncertain; but he never missed an occasion of visiting her, and frequently crossed the wood at night unaccompanied for that purpose, which temerity seconded the

projects of the Count d'Entraigues, who thought the only chance of his grandson's accession to the throne of France would be through the death of Henry IV., which he contemplated effecting. This man lay in ambush with a party of assassins, for the purpose of murdering him, but Henry's intrepidity and vigour triumphed over these dangers. He would, however, have perished, but for Mariette, whose father obliged her to demand an interview, and indicate an isolated spot for the rendezvous. She accordingly appointed the meeting, but sent to warn the king of the danger, and by that means saved his life, and rendered an eminent service to her country.

In the mean time, the Marchioness de Verneuil concocted her schemes, seconded by the King of Spain's agent, and supported in Rome by her confessor, the Capuchin Archange Chonvallon, the Duke of Savoy, and the King of Spain, as well as her brother the Count d'Auvergne, and Marshal Bouillon. The apparent motive of this conspiracy was the re-establishment of the Catholic religion, which had been much weakened by the Protestants in France. Her conscientious scruples induced her to ask the king's permission to seek an asylum in England with her relation the Duke of Lennox,

to which request Henry willingly acceded; when the marchioness, irritated at having so easily obtained her request, which she hoped would have been refused or reluctantly granted, imperiously claimed the fulfilment of his promise of marriage. Henry, who esteemed her less than formerly, assumed his sovereign authority, and desired her to resign the document, offering her as an indemnity the baton of Marshal of France for her father, and twenty thousand crowns for herself. Henrietta and her parents protested that it was not in their possession, and declared at one time that it had been sent to Spain, and at another to England; this important paper was, however, found in an iron box buried at the foot of a tree in the park at Marcoussis. Her resignation of this document, which was given to the king in the presence of the Duke of Montpensier, the Count of Soissons, the President Teannin, and the Chancellor de Sillery, who drew up the act, the marchioness declared to be not binding, as she said it was drawn from her by constraint: she therefore considered her son's right none the less imprescriptible.

If Henry thought that the ambitious projects of the family d'Entraigues were thrown aside by the recovery of this little document, he deceived

himself, for their disappointment urged them to violence, and the Count d'Entraigues determined to carry things to extremities. Supported by Philip III., king of Spain, the Count d'Auvergne, the Duke de Tremouille, the Prince of Condé, and the Duke of Bouillon, who reproached the king with having seduced her under false promises, they conceived the audacious project of having the Dauphin's illegitimacy proclaimed.

This conspiracy was discovered; and if it caused Henry IV. uneasiness, what must have been the terrors of Mary de Medicis!—A queen, and mother, who found herself menaced with dethronement, and had the prospect of beholding the sceptre wrested from the hands of her son.

The king at first expressed himself determined to act with the greatest severity towards the conspirators. The Count d'Entraigues maintained that he had only sought the honour of his daughter, and the Count d'Auvergne endeavoured to throw all the blame on his sister, who on her part recriminated him.

The ungrateful Henrietta was allowed her own Hôtel of Saint-Paul for her prison, and her father and brother were confined in the Conciergerie. Closely guarded by a chevalier du guet, and

deprived of the society of her children, the marchioness, far from exhibiting any alarm, unceasingly repeated, "If the king takes my life, the world will accuse him of murdering his wife; I was queen before the Italian .... I claim three things from him; pardon for my father, a rope for my brother, and justice for myself."

The queen demanded prompt justice, and the king, wishing to conciliate the dignity of the crown, with his natural magnanimity required the marchioness's submission, to enable him to pardon her; but, full of pride, and bent on insulting the queen, she refused to humble herself or acknowledge her fault. During the course of the proceedings Henry often expressed his impatience at her not having made any efforts to appease him, or sent any message of submission.

"Do you think," he said to Sully, "that she will humble herself and ask pardon?"

"Yes," answered the minister, "if she believes that you have no longer any affection for her; but if she perceives that you love her still, and that you have made all this commotion solely for the purpose of bringing her to your will, her haughtiness is sufficient to prevent her from ever bending."

The parliament condemned d'Entraigues and

d'Auvergne to be beheaded, and the marchioness to have her head shaved and be confined in the Convent de Beaumont-les-Tours for life; it was not until she heard the condemnation, that she made use of those efforts which she knew were all-powerful over the heart of the monarch; and the woman who two days before sent word to her Sovereign that she would never be reproached "d'avoir baisé la main qui l'enchaînait," at length threw herself at his feet, and induced him by her tears and protestations not only to suspend the executions, but even to change the disposition of the judgment. Entraigues was exiled at Malesherbes, and the Count d'Auvergne condemned to remain in the Bastille, "pour mater son indomptable malice contre sa sœur;" as for the marchioness, she was restored to the king's favour.

This triumph rendered her still more arrogant and proud, from the influence she possessed, and she forgot the public respect she owed the queen. During a journey to Saint Germain, the carriage in which the king and queen were seated was overturned into the Seine; Henry IV., with his usual agility, contrived to save himself, but the queen would have been drowned if Monsieur de la Chataigneraie had not plunged into the river, and dragged

her from the water. The Marchioness de Verneuil, on being informed of the event, exclaimed that, as the king was saved, had she been there, she would have said with all her heart "*La Reine boit.*"

It might at least have been expected that Henry would have resented this insolence, since Mary's first words, on recovering her respiration, were to make inquiries respecting his safety; but he took no notice of the remark, which was reported to the queen, and excited her just resentment against the king, for continuing to notice a woman who so often insulted her. A separation between the king and queen was the result, but after some little time a reconciliation was effected by the efforts of Sully and Villeroi.

At length, wearied with her capricious conduct, Henry ceased to consider the unworthy Marchioness de Verneuil as his mistress, but, notwithstanding her crimes, she still aimed at being elevated to the rank of a princess. She first listened to the proposals of the Prince de Joinville, who proved inconstant to her before the conclusion of the engagement, and she afterwards had the banns of her marriage with the Duke de Guise published. Nevertheless the king continued to

see her occasionally; and even on the day of his death, walked with her in the garden of the Tuileries, conversed about her children, and promised her the release of her brother, who was still confined in the Bastille.

After Henry's murder, in 1610, which some historians assert that she was privy to, the marchioness had the mortification and disappointment of losing the husband that she flattered her ambition by the promise of a union with. The Duke of Guise alleged that the preliminary contract was false, and, supported by Mary de Medicis, who was pleased to have an opportunity of retaliating upon her insolent rival, married the dowager Countess de Montpensier. Henrietta d'Entraigues at length found herself obliged to retire to her Château de Verneuil, where, after having obtained promises of marriage from three illustrious persons, she died obscurely in 1633, unmarried, at the age of fifty-four. She had two children by Henry IV., Henry de Bourbon, Duke de Verneuil, Bishop of Metz; and Gabrielle Angelique, Marchioness de la Valette, Duchess d'Epernon. The last years of Henrietta d'Entraigues' life were devoted to religious exercises; she founded a Convent of Annonciades.

Henry next attached himself to a young orphan

named Jacqueline de Beuil, daughter of one of the most devoted servants of the crown, who had been carefully educated under the superintendence of Charlotte de Tremouille, Princess of Condé. Henry created her Countess of Moret in 1606, and legitimized her son Antoine de Bourbon, Count of Moret, to whom he gave a wealthy estate. This young scion of the valiant Henry perished gloriously at the battle of Castelnaudari in 1632.

The countess offended the king by suffering some familiarities from the Prince de Joinville; he even ordered the prince to leave the kingdom in consequence, to which he never returned until after Henry's death, and the monarch discontinued his liaison with the Countess de Moret, who in 1617 married Réné du Bec, Marquis de Vardes, by whom she had two sons, one of whom is celebrated in the annals of the court of Louis XIV. Tallemant des Réaux asserts that Jacqueline died from poison administered to her by accident.

After Henry's rupture with the Countess de Moret, he determined to forego all future attachments. "You know," said he in conversing with his friend Sully, "that in regard of my mistresses, which all the world knows to be my most predominant passion, I have checked them on some occa-

sions, and greatly preferred your advice before theirs. And I will always do so," he continued with enthusiasm; "I will quit mistresses, love, the chase, buildings, and pleasure of every description rather than lose the smallest opportunity of acquiring honour and glory, the principal of which, after my duty towards God, my wife and children, my faithful servants, and my people, whom I love as my own offspring, is, to preserve myself as a loyal prince of good faith and word, and in my last days perform actions which will crown them with honour and glory."

Henry spoke his wishes when he promised absolute empire over his passions for the future; but he was destined to give the world one more spectacle of weakness, the result of which might have been more serious than any of the former, had not his death occurred before his projects were carried into effect.

At the age of fifteen Charlotte Henrietta de Montmorenci, daughter of Henry I., Duke of Montmorenci, Constable of France, was presented at court by her aunt, Diana d'Angoulême. A more accomplished or beautiful woman had not appeared there within the memory of the oldest courtiers. To her personal attractions she added

the charm of simplicity, being free from all artifice; all the young noblemen aspired to her hand, which was accorded to the celebrated Bassompierre, and a short time previous to the celebration of their marriage the queen gave a ball in which Mademoiselle de Montmorenci danced in the attire of the Goddess of the Chase.

Her fairy form could not escape the curious eye of Henry IV., upon whose heart she made a deep impression, the more lamentable because the object of his regard was but fifteen years of age, whereas he was fifty-eight. He soon perceived that Bassompierre, who was handsome, young, and clever, was much attached to his young fiancée, and in his anxiety suffered the secret of his passion to escape him, and entreated Bassompierre to resign her hand. In Bassompierre's memoirs it is said that the king one day drew him aside, and said, "Bassompierre, jè te veux parler en ami; je suis devenue non-seulement amoureux, mais fou et outré de Mademoiselle de Montmorenci. Si tu l'épouses, et qu'elle t'aime, je te haïrai; si elle m'aimait, tu me haïrais: il vaut mieux que cela ne soit point cause de notre mésintelligence." Bassompierre, to whom this marriage was very advantageous, was with much difficulty persuaded to make this cruel

sacrifice, upon which Henry embraced him affectionately and shed tears of satisfaction; so insignificant and weak do the passions sometimes render the greatest of men!

Henry was desirous of forming a union for Mademoiselle de Montmorenci with his nephew Henry de Bourbon, Prince of Condé, who was first prince of the blood, and in consequence heir presumptive to the throne in case of the death of the two young princes. He was exceedingly accomplished and clever, and much more devoted to study and the chase than to the society of women. The king's attentions to Charlotte were so remarkable that the prince hesitated to enter into an engagement with her, and requested his guardian De Thou to inform him that he objected to the marriage; the king, divining his motive, sent for him and said, in presence of the Duke de Bouillon, "Vous pouvez l'épouser, sans aucun soupçon sur mon compte," and on that declaration the marriage was concluded.

The fêtes on the occasion were most brilliant, and the king presented the bride with jewels to the amount of ten thousand crowns. After their union magnificent presents to the princess and the house of Condé abounded, so that the king's gene-

rosity became a subject of suspicion for the husband.

Henry's love received no return from the princess, whose vanity was nevertheless flattered at having to number the king amongst her other brilliant conquests. In one of her letters she expresses her regret that the Cardinal Bentivoglio was not elected to the pontifical throne, for in that case she would have counted amongst her lovers a pope, a king, cardinals, princes, and marshals, besides numerous noblemen.

The prince of Condé at first withdrew his wife from court by degrees, and Henry, noticing his precaution, tried to gain his confidence by new honours and gifts. The prince's confidants poisoned these gifts by persuading him that the king's liberality arose from a design to seduce his young wife; and Henry himself gave rise to suspicions by his imprudence. Not satisfied with expressing his discontent of Condé's absence from court, he several times disguised himself and paid nocturnal visits to the princess for the pleasure of only enjoying a few moments' conversation with her.

These indiscretions confirmed the prince in his resolution of withdrawing his wife from those places which the king frequented. He conducted her

first to Saint Vallery, then to Fontainebleau; and at length, finding that he unceasingly found his way to the princess's domicile, no longer hesitated between dishonour and flight, and formed the determination of leaving France without his uncle's permission. He had taken the precaution of retiring to his château of Verteuil, on the borders of Picardy, which he left before daylight; the princess rode on a pillion behind him, and was escorted by two of her women and two gentlemen, who proceeded in the same manner until they arrived at the Low Countries, which were then governed by the Archduke Albert, who had married his cousin the Infanta Isabella. These two, who were united by the bonds of love and virtue as well as of marriage, retained the gravity of the ancient manners in their court. Their frequent balls and assemblies, instead of being accompanied with tumult, were conducted with that order and propriety which proclaimed the character of the host and hostess; gallantry was found there, but without irregularity or indecorum; gaiety and cheerfulness reigned without constraint, because nothing was to be feared from calumny or malicious interpretations. All things were executed with order,

and the women, following the example of the archduchess, employed their mornings in needle-work and domestic concerns.

Sully recounts the manner in which the news of Condé's flight was received at the court of France. Henry, who was playing a game at cards with Bassompierre, on being informed of it exclaimed, "Je suis perdu, mon ami .... cet homme enlève sa femme..... je ne sais si c'est pour la tuer ou pour la conduire hors de France." He then hastily quitted the table and paced the room, sometimes stamping his foot violently and suffering exclamations of vexation and disappointment to escape him, while the courtiers, affecting sympathy and grief, turned their heads aside to smile; in the queen's apartment loud acclamations of joy were expressed at the event, but the most curious scene took place in the council, which Henry in his weakness and despair assembled, though it was past midnight.

Villeroi, the first speaker, was of opinion that some sensible person should be sent to the Prince of Condé to point out to him the impropriety of his proceedings, and to engage him to return to France with his wife. This advice required too

much time, and the result of it was uncertain; it was therefore not adopted. "Yours?" said Henry, turning towards Sully.

"This affair," replied the minister, "is too important to decide on immediately; I have just been called from my bed when in the middle of my first sleep, and my conceptions are not yet awakened."

"No matter—say what you think it is best to do," answered the king hastily.

"Nothing."

"How! nothing?"

"Nothing, Sire; and when the Spaniards find that you neither trouble yourself about the Prince of Condé nor his wife, they will abandon them themselves." Henry turned pensively towards Jeannin, who had sufficient time to reflect upon what counsel would best please the king, and accordingly advised that the fugitives should be brought back by force; that the archduke should be required to give them up, and if he refused, to declare war against him. This advice prevailed, and Praslin, captain of the guards, was immediately despatched with the message to the Low Countries, in 1610.

Albert's reply was noble and hospitable: he re-

fused to favour the intrigue. He, however, entreated Condé to seek an asylum elsewhere, wishing to maintain a good understanding with Henry IV., and the prince was obliged to pass all along the frontiers of France to reach Germany. Praslin is suspected of not having used all the power offered him, from a compunction to act in so odious an affair.

The prince of Condé, not wishing to expose his host to any inconvenience on his account, would have taken his wife with him, but the archduchess would not suffer her to run the risks which such a journey would expose her to, and promised the husband to take care of her and conduct her to Brussels.

Henry, having failed in his first attempt, resolved to employ both force and stratagem to bring the princess back to France, and found but too many base and servile adulators to serve his views and encourage his hopes. The princess at first cared far less for the king than for the costly presents he made her, the fêtes of which she was the heroine, the distinguished preference, the praises, and the homage, amounting to adoration, which he paid her. But when the suspicions of her husband caused him to withdraw her from court

and deprive her of all these pleasures, and when, moreover, she was wearied with the grave monotony of the court in the Low Countries, and felt herself under the severe guardianship of the Infanta Isabella, whose devout occupations and ideas caused her to exercise a rigorous watch over her actions, she began to regret her departure from France, and to feel indifferent towards her husband. The archduchess, in speaking of the Princess of Condé, said, "C'est un caractère angélique, dans lequel il n'y a à reprendre que sa passion pour le roi, qui est un sortilège."

But there was nothing supernatural in this sorcery; the magic of it consisted in the counsels she received from the women who surrounded her in Brussels, and who were all gained over by the emissaries from France. They placed the king's letters in her hands, dictated her replies, inflamed her imagination, and easily persuaded a girl of sixteen, who was accustomed to a style of romance, to employ terms of tenderness and illusory expressions of love, which she considered nothing more than "*jeux d'esprit*" and amusement, but which redoubled the king's passion, because he imagined that they sprung from a heart which was entirely devoted to him. The most artful of

these women was the Countess de Berny, wife of the French ambassador; and the king sent Gabrielle's brother, Annibal d'Estrées, Marquis de Cœuvres, to second her, with directions to risk everything to induce the princess to return.

At this time the Prince of Condé returned to Brussels, and the king's agent, d'Estrées, recommended him to proceed to France with his wife, to which he promised to accede, provided he could live apart from the court and be assured of a place of security. The negotiators replied that it would be a precaution which was dishonourable to the king, and that if he preferred he could procure a divorce, in which case Henry would assist him. Condé did not refuse, but maintained that in the mean time his wife should remain with him.

D'Estrées at length resolved to settle the difficulty by carrying her off. He set spies to watch them, and discovered the prince's place of resort and the princess's moments of leisure: certain of success, and aided by the women who surrounded her, he formed his plan of enterprise and sent it to the king, who counted the moments which should bring her back to Paris; and when he judged that all obstacles were surmounted, and the execution of his project was infallible, said to

the queen, "On such a day and at such an hour you will see the Princess of Condé here."

Mary de Medicis immediately sent a courier to inform the Spanish ambassador, the Marquis Spinola, and her messenger went with such speed that he was at Brussels before the hour fixed for the abduction. Condé asked the protection of guards, which the archduke granted, and the prince hastened with them to the palace d'Orange, where he and his wife resided.

The rumour of the intrigue spread throughout the town, and d'Estrées, finding that his plot was discovered, determined to give the affair the most plausible appearance; he therefore repaired to the archduke, and, though the hour was late, demanded an audience. He complained bitterly of the injurious reports which had been circulated respecting his sovereign, and requested that Condé's guard should be dismissed. Albert calmly replied that he was well aware an enterprise had been formed to carry off the Princess of Condé, though he did not suppose the king had taken any part in it, but that in all probability it arose from the wish of some of his majesty's zealous subjects to oblige him; but that to obviate any inconvenience of the kind he should receive the princess into his own

palace, where she would be under the care of himself and his duchess.

This was a blow to d'Estrées' hopes; he however did everything to cause a delay, and by his advice the princess feigned indisposition: at the same time she requested the Marquis Spinola to give a ball, which with a smile he excused himself from doing under the circumstances. This man had always carefully watched over the princess in accordance with his orders, and paid her great attention, so that he was suspected of being influenced by a more tender feeling towards her than the interest of the case required. She perceived it herself, and on one occasion, when recounting the adventure, gaily remarked, "*Mon étoile me destinait à être aimée par des vieux.*"

At length d'Estrées, finding that he could do nothing more, informed Condé that the king expected he would immediately return to France, or he would be declared criminal of high treason; but the prince was not dismayed—he respectfully replied to the royal summons, but severely reproached d'Estrées for the part he had performed in the affair: however, to avoid being arrested, he returned to Milan, leaving the princess a second time under the care of the duchess.

All negotiations having ceased, Henry united with the Duke of Savoy and the Venetians, put his troops in motion, and displayed to the astonished Spaniards the most formidable army that had ever menaced their power. To prevent this war Philip proposed a marriage between his daughter the infanta and the dauphin, both of whom were the same age; but the king refused any negotiation, and his refusal strengthened the opinion that it was neither for the interest of his allies nor for that of his kingdom that he was about to break the peace, but on account of his passion for the Princess of Condé, who, like another Helen, would have seen Europe in arms on her account if the assassinating hand of Ravillac had not shortened the days of this great warrior and good king, but weak man; who at the very moment he received his death-blow was on his way to the Hôtel Zamet to visit a young Languedocian named Paulet, who was the daughter of his secretary, and the most beautiful singer at court, but of a very indifferent reputation.

After the death of Henry IV. the Prince de Condé returned to Paris, and his sister the Princess of Orange conducted his wife there, where she

was reunited to her husband, for whom she had always entertained the greatest respect.

The Cardinal Bentivoglio, who took a lively interest in Charlotte, counselled the young couple to lay claim to the throne of France; but the prince indignantly rejected his perfidious insinuations, fearing that if he aimed at attaining the crown he would not only be exposing himself to great risks, but also placing his wife, to whom the cardinal was attached, in the same dangerous position as before. They were therefore content to remain in the rank they already possessed, with the enjoyment of mutual affection.

From that time the princess strictly performed the most important duties of a wife, for when Condé was arrested and imprisoned in the Bastille in 1616 by Mary de Medicis, finding that she could not procure his liberty, she requested as a favour to be allowed to share his disgrace, and for the space of two years resided with him in the prison, where she affectionately devoted herself to him, and was the consoling angel of his captivity. Not less attached to her own family, she used every effort with Louis XIII. in favour of her brother the heroic and virtuous Marshal de Montmorenci, who

was condemned to be beheaded: as she could obtain no grace from the king, she fell on her knees before Richelieu, in the hope of obtaining his pardon, but that cruel and heartless minister was content with raising her, and in his turn throwing himself at her feet; the despot was, however, deaf to her prayers, and Montmorenci was decapitated at Toulouse.

The brilliant spring-time of the Princess of Condé's life was exchanged for an obscure autumn. She lost her husband in 1646, and languished in a decline for four years after, when she followed him to the tomb at Chatillon-sur-Loing, at the age of fifty-six, leaving a daughter, Anne Genevieve de Bourbon, who was married to Henry d'Orléans, Duke de Longueville; and two sons, one of whom was Armand de Bourbon, Prince de Conti, and the other Louis II. de Bourbon, who was known to posterity as the great Condé.

The day previous to the king's assassination was the one fixed for the queen's coronation. Mary had been for some time very desirous of receiving the royal unction at Saint Denis, but Henry, who was unwilling that the nation should be put to expenses for luxuries, at first refused to give his consent to this ceremony; but, naturally kind-

hearted, and perhaps also desirous of making her some amends for his infidelity, he at length yielded to her wishes. Mary appeared at this solemnity blazing with jewels, and Henry, who was gratified to behold her in these rich ornaments, heightened her glory and vanity by declaring in his enthusiasm that he had never seen so handsome a woman as his queen. The ceremony was performed at Saint Denis by the Cardinal Joyeuse in 1610, and magnificent entertainments were prepared to celebrate the occasion; but some sinister predictions had awakened the solicitude of the queen, which was but too well founded, for the general joy was turned into universal mourning, and the voice of all France exclaimed, "*Nous avons perdu notre père.*"

This great modern hero was not lamented under the palace roof of his wife as he was bewailed beneath the thatch of the cottage, for Mary de Medicis was ignorant of the extent of her loss. Two hours after the king was murdered she had taken every precautionary measure necessary for assuring herself of the regency.

The Duke d'Epernon, colonel-general of the French guards, who was not remarkable for his attachment to Henry, and who, though seated in the carriage beside the monarch at the time he re-

ceived the fatal blow, neither attempted to prevent nor arrest the assassin, surrounded the house of parliament with troops, and, after haranguing the members, prevailed on them to declare Mary de Medicis regent of France; and from the moment she assumed the reins of government, discord began to manifest itself. Henry's faithful friend, the virtuous Sully, was dismissed from the council, as well as Jeannin and Villeroi; and this was the first act of her unskilful government, notwithstanding the late king, foreseeing the evil which would arise in France when he no longer guided the state, gave the queen that wise advice which should have been regarded by her as permanent laws. He recommended her to retain the services of those ministers he had placed in the council, to suffer no foreigners to interfere in the affairs of administration, and to prevent the increase of the Jesuits in the kingdom.

The discarded ministers were replaced by Père Cotton, the pope's nuncio, and the ambassador of Spain, all of whom were suspected as accomplices in the king's assassination, but who were nevertheless loaded with favours. The Jesuits, who triumphed in the increase of their power, endeavoured to create new wars on account of their religion; and the state was agitated by the discontented Huguenots,

to whom Mary de Medicis was obliged to accord the treaty of Saint Menehould, in 1614.

The queen's friend and confidant, Leonora Galigaï, and her husband, obtained entire influence over her, which gave great offence to the nobles; Concini, who had never used a sword, was elevated to the rank of a marshal of France, and his wife was appointed "dame d'atours," in the place of Madame de Richelieu, who had been chosen by the late king.

Unfortunately this excess of favour was bestowed on persons who abused it; for instead of moderating the extent of the queen's bounties, or sharing it with families who were capable of protecting them in case of a reverse, and thus avoiding the hatred and diminishing the envy which preference always occasions, these children of fortune, in aspiring to obtain too much, eventually ruined themselves, and dragged their mistress into the same abyss.

Leonora Galigaï was one day asked how she had acquired so much influence over the queen. "Have you not employed philters, magic, and supernatural means?" said her inquirer. "None," replied Leonora, "but that ascendancy which strong minds possess over the weak." Mary's natural obstinacy may have been one cause for this

attachment, as it was remarked that any advice offered her on the subject only seemed to render her more determined.

"I well know," she one day remarked in public, "that all the court are opposed to Concini; but, having supported him in defiance of the king, my husband, I shall certainly support him against others."

While the husband regulated the affairs of state, the wife occupied herself with all concerns of a lucrative nature: she sold favours and privileges; she supported and forwarded petitions, just or unjust, provided she was remunerated, obtained large sums from the treasury, and filled her house with riches.

In 1615 the parliament remonstrated on the augmentation of pensions, and the immense expenses of the royal household, but were not heeded. Henry IV. had left a flourishing kingdom; he had paid twenty-five millions of debts, out of a revenue of thirty-five millions, and left thirty millions, the fruits of his economy, in the Bastille; and the queen, after having dissipated these treasures, burthened the nation with taxes, placed France under the yoke of Spain, and by her culpable conduct confirmed the general opinion that she was not a stranger to the conspiracy connected with the king's death.

In 1615, Louis XIII., who was then fifteen years of age, proceeded to Bordeaux, to receive his young wife, Anne of Austria, accompanied by his favourite companion, Albert de Luynes, who was very intimate with him, and made use of his intimacy to point out to the king the errors of his mother's government, and the odious power of Concini and his wife. Louis is said to have replied to him, on one occasion, "Ce maréchal sera la ruine de mon royaume; mais on ne peut pas dire cela à ma mère, parcequ'elle se mettrait en colère."

In fact no person ever carried the spirit of vengeance farther than Mary de Medicis. She could suffer neither remonstrance nor obstacle; anger rendered her capable of any act of extravagance, and when from interested motives she was obliged to restrain herself, the violence of her nature expressed itself in the alteration of her countenance, and in her health. Gramond says, "Nihil in fœmina medicum: si amat, uritur; odio implacabilis est; contempta, amens fit." So it was with the queen; her passions were carried to extremes; friendship with her was blind devotion, and hatred execration.

Louis XIII.'s majority had not yet arrived to deliver him from the rule of his imperious guardian, and France from its odious yoke; but at length the

king, wearied with such insupportable despotism and hoping to pacify the nation, gave the fatal order for the fall of Concini, in 1617. The marshal, having entered the Louvre to proceed to council, was detained by Vitri, the captain of the guards, who demanded his sword. Concini made a movement either to surrender or defend himself, and at the same moment received three pistol shots, from which he instantly expired. The king appeared on the balcony to authorise this action by his presence, and was immediately surrounded and congratulated, as on the occasion of a public rejoicing. During this species of triumph, the queen's guards were disarmed, the doors of her apartments which communicated with those of the king were blocked up, and Leonora Galigaï was arrested in the presence of her mistress.

During the remainder of the day the courtiers employed themselves in recounting the catalogue of vices and crimes of those to whom the day before they had bent the knee, and on the day following the populace exhibited a proof of their ferocious and turbulent character. Concini's body, which had been privately buried at Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, was discovered, disinterred, and dragged through the streets, hanged, and then dismembered,

and the authors of the catastrophe encouraged the blind rage of the mob, because their excesses proved to the king that he had done right in sacrificing a man who was so much detested.

Nothing could exceed the astonishment and grief of Mary de Medicis on hearing the extent of her misfortune. She was mortified to think that she had been so easily deceived and overcome by the young king, and his equally inexperienced companion. She however still hoped to regain her ascendancy over her son, if she could only converse with him, and earnestly solicited that favour; but she was refused, and informed that she could not recover his good opinion until she had withdrawn herself for a certain period from the court. At this news, Mary, who saw the entire overthrow of her power, shed those bitter tears at the loss of her authority, which were much more due to the memory of her husband. The command to leave Paris was softened by her having had the choice of the place to which she would retire, as well as of the persons who were to accompany her; and she selected the château of Blois for her residence.

All the ministers that Concini had appointed precipitately retired, except Richelieu, Bishop of Luçon, who was the queen's chaplain, and who was

determined to remain by Mary de Medicis in her misfortune. He is, however, suspected of having sought his own advantage rather than that of the queen in this apparent mark of fidelity, having been a spy upon her actions, more than a friend and counsellor.

At the moment of the queen's departure, Louis XIII. went to her apartment, but the interview was short. After embracing him, she begged mercy in favour of Leonora Galigaï, but Louis was embarrassed, and retired without replying. Mary advanced to retain Luynes, who was quitting the room with him, but the king called to him to follow in an authoritative tone. The queen then took leave of her daughter-in-law, Anne of Austria, who lamented her disgrace, although she had been the means of creating dissensions between herself and her husband, and afterwards proceeded to her carriage bathed in tears. Louis XIII. watched her departure with that air of entire satisfaction which a youth assumes when first freed from scholastic discipline.

But that was not the last scene in the tragedy. Leonora Galigaï was also made an example, for suffering herself to be carried away by the torrent of fortune. She and her husband had met with

riches and grandeur in their path, which had been opened to them by the friendship of a powerful queen; they had entered upon it with intrepidity, walked on in confidence, and in the end encountered ignominy and death. Leonora Galigaï's great fault was her thirst for gold, and the crimes imputed to her displayed more of the rancour of her enemies than that she had done anything worthy of death. Finding that they could bring no proofs of treason against her, she was accused of sorcery, of having corresponded with Jewish magicians and demons, of having refused to eat pork, to have neglected attending mass on Saturdays, and of having shut herself up in the church with Milanese and Florentines, for the purpose of practising various superstitions. These imputations seemed so puerile to Leonora, that when questioned respecting them she could not forbear to smile; but when she perceived that the judges persisted in the accusation, she wept bitterly, and said, that by such charges she knew they were determined to condemn her. She was spared nothing that could add to her affliction, but was made to drink the cup of sorrow to the dregs. Persons of all classes filled the chapel at the time her sentence was read to her. On entering, she exclaimed, "Oimé, que de monde!"

and endeavoured to envelop her head with her veil, but she was obliged to remove it, and listen with her face uncovered to her condemnation.

The law declared her culpable of treason, both human and divine, and condemned her to be beheaded at the Place de Grève, her head and body to be burned, and her ashes to be thrown to the winds; her house to be razed to the ground, her lands confiscated, and her son, a most amiable and intellectual youth, was pronounced ignoble and incapable of holding any appointment in the kingdom. Five of the council refused to agree to this iniquitous sentence, and it is said that Servin, the advocate-general, would not assent to it, but under the promise of Louis XIII.'s pardon for the accused.

Leonora, disgraced in her honour, and that of her husband and son, for a moment gave way to her grief. At the worst, she expected but banishment, and was overwhelmed with a torrent of grief at the future lot which she feared would be the portion of her friendless son; but after paying this tribute to nature, she dried her tears, and armed herself with firmness. No more murmurs or regrets escaped her, she resigned herself with Christian fortitude to her unhappy fate, and listened with devo-

tion to the consolation which religion offered her. She was dragged to execution through a crowd of persons who looked on in silence, and whose hatred appeared to have subsided into pity: entirely occupied with her religious duties, she noticed neither the populace nor the stake; intrepid, but modest, she died without boast and without fear.

The murder of Concini, the execution of his wife, and the exile of the queen-mother, were followed by the disgrace of almost all their partisans. Richelieu, who had accompanied Mary to Blois, received an order to quit her, and accordingly retired to his bishopric of Luçon: he was afterwards exiled to Avignon.

Luynes and his associates took every precaution to prevent any communication between the king and queen-mother, who complained to all France of the severe captivity in which she was retained, without having the consolation of once seeing her son, to whom she declared she had most important state secrets to communicate, and which she would not commit to the keeping of his favourite. The duke de Luynes endeavoured to conciliate her with promises that the king, when released from the cares of state business, would visit her, but the interview was always delayed.

The honour of delivering the queen-mother from her prison was reserved for one of her own countrymen, named Ruccelaï, and Mary's faithful friend the duke d'Epernon. The former followed the queen in her exile, but returned to Paris under favour of the friendship of Bassompierre, and the promise of holding no correspondence with her. But Ruccelaï had already determined on undertaking the enterprise; and, though a person of most luxurious habits, possessed that constancy and intrepidity which braves all danger and fatigue. He commenced by leaving his abbey secretly, and going to the neighbourhood of Blois, where he contrived to establish a clandestine correspondence with the queen-mother, and as soon as he had made her acquainted with his plans, traversed the country in the midst of a severe December, evaded the spies who were scattered throughout his route, and sometimes on horseback, and at others on foot, arrived at Sedan, where he proposed to the duke of Bouillon to put himself at the head of the party formed for Mary de Medicis. The duke expressed himself flattered at the confidence reposed in him, but declared that he alone was incapable of serving her, and indicated that the duke of Epernon was the only man who could undertake the charge.

Ruccelaï and Epernon entertained great animosity for each other; nevertheless the former determined to trust to the generosity of the latter, who was not unworthy of his confidence, and willingly joined in the confederacy for the release of the queen-mother. Their plot narrowly escaped discovery, Ruccelaï having placed some letters for the queen in the hands of a young man named de Lorme, who, imagining that the packet contained important information, proceeded to Paris, instead of Blois, and requested an audience with Luynes; but as he was supposed to be an impostor, who presented himself under false pretences to obtain money, he was suffered to wait in the duke's antechambers for three successive days. A parliamentary counsellor, named Du Buisson, who was much attached to the queen-mother, having been informed by his valet that de Lorme was in Paris, and astonished at not having seen him as usual, sent to seek for him, when he found that he frequented Luynes' hotel: suspecting some treachery, he despatched a messenger, who informed de Lorme that he was sent by Luynes to hear what he had to communicate, and handing him five hundred crowns, possessed himself of the despatches.

The queen-mother escaped in the night by descending a ladder from her bed-room window; she

crossed the gardens of the château on foot, accompanied by her attendant Catherine, who conveyed her casket of jewels, Bresue, her equerry, and Du Plessis, Richelieu's brother. A carriage awaited them at the end of the drawbridge, and they proceeded to Mont-Richard by the light of torches. She was soon joined by the Archbishop of Toulouse and Epernon, under whose escort she reached Angoulême.

When the news of the queen's escape reached the court, Luynes, who was obliged, in conformity with the king's wish, to enter into a treaty with her, offered, as the basis of his negotiation, that Mary de Medicis should abandon the Duke of Epernon, and that he should be made an example of. But Mary replied that she would never abandon a man who had risked all to restore her to liberty, and that, rather than expose him to the resentment of his enemies, she would take the whole evil upon herself. Luynes determined to proceed to extremities with the duke, and sent troops against him. Hostilities commenced at the little town of Uzerche in Limousin, which was pillaged, and a universal voice was raised throughout France against this war, which was considered odious in its principles and dishonourable to the king.

At this time Richelieu, who was languishing in

exile at Avignon, imagined that his services might not be rejected in the then embarrassed condition of affairs, and sent his brother-in-law René de Vignerot to offer them to the queen-mother, who acceptedthem, and requested that he would proceed to Angoulême ; this circumstance having been known to the king proves that Richelieu entertained a secret intelligence with the court, of which Mary de Medicis was ignorant. This man acted with the greatest prudence ; he appeared to desire no personal advantage beyond the esteem of the queen-mother, and affected the greatest attachment for Epernon ; by which he gained the hearts of both.

It was at this period that Richelieu laid the first foundation of his fortune by his efforts to conciliate the king and the queen-mother, and an interview which took place at the Château de Courcières, in Tours, was the result of his endeavours.

On meeting, the mother and son manifested more surprise than affection. "Monsieur mon fils," said she, "que vous nous êtes fait grand depuis que je ne vous ai vu !" "Je suis crû, Madame," replied the king, "pour votre service." They passed three days together, but Mary de Medicis enjoyed more of her daughter-in-law's caresses than of her son's society, which she would have preferred. "How,"

she one day asked the Prince of Piedmont, "can I obtain his good graces?" He replied, "Love what he loves; and those few words contain the law and the prophets." The advice was good, and Mary owed all her unhappiness to the neglect of it.

After this short interview, the queen-mother left Tours for Angers, hoping soon to be recalled to Paris. The famous friar Joseph du Tremblay first appeared at this time, and was the secret agent between Richelieu and Luynes. The former, by his skilful management, gained an entire ascendency over Mary de Medicis, around whom he encouraged all the discontented who became formidable; and the Prince of Condé, whom Louis XIII. had liberated from the Bastille, attacked the queen's troops at the Pont-de-Cé: the expedition proved unfavourable for her; and she was obliged to enter into a treaty, which, among other articles, contained the promise of a cardinal's hat for Richelieu.

The second interview between Mary de Medicis and her son, which took place at the Château de Brissac, was more cordial than the one at Tours. Louis XIII. embraced her, and said, "Je vous tiens, et vous ne m'échapperez plus." She replied, "Vous n'aurez pas de peine à me retenir, parceque je suis persuadée que je serai toujours traitée en

mère, par un fils tel que vous." They then agreed to proceed together to Poitou and Guyenne, to pacify the rebellious and discontented; after which they returned to Paris, where Mary united her court with that of Anne of Austria, and skilfully recovered her influence over the king.

As long as Richelieu had been of service to her, Mary de Medicis protected and assisted in aggrandizing him; but when she saw the power of this Colossus, she was afraid of her work; his influence excited her resentment, which grew at length into hatred, and she determined on his fall.

Her enmity broke out on his return from La Rochelle in 1626, but Richelieu foresaw it, and Mary de Medicis was the only victim on the "*journée des dupes.*" Yielding to her solicitations, Louis XIII., on leaving Paris for Versailles, promised his mother to dismiss the cardinal, who followed the king to that place, and so artfully insinuated himself into Louis's good graces, that he determined to retain him in his service; and when Mary arrived at Versailles, it was to be informed of her new disgrace.

Having refused all reconciliation with the cardinal, she was confined in the Château de Compiègne, under the guard of Marshal d'Estrées, 1631; and her friends, her servants, and even her medical at-

tendant, were imprisoned in the Bastille. She, however, effected an escape to the Low Countries, where she was kindly received by the Archduchess Isabella; but in 1638 the war between Spain and France prevented her remaining there.

A wanderer with indifferent resources, the widow of Henry the Great next sought an asylum with her daughter Henrietta, wife of Charles I. King of England. The King and Queen of England welcomed her kindly, but the troubles which agitated that country rendered it an uncertain residence, and Charles endeavoured to reconcile her once more with her son. The cardinal minister would not, however, suffer their reunion to take place, and it was decided that she should be sent to Florence.

Mary de Medicis could not endure the thought of her native land being witness to her reverses and disgrace, and remained in England as long as she was permitted; but the parliament, with the redoubtable Cromwell at its head, obliged the forlorn queen to leave that country. She went next to Holland, where she hoped to remain, but the fear of disobliging the cardinal rendered the government deaf to her prayers, and she was robbed of that retreat. The unfortunate Mary, abandoned by her children, rejected by her late husband's faithful allies, and

obstinately refusing to appear at Florence in the state of humiliation to which she was then reduced, anxiously sought a resting-place: in vain she addressed complaints to the Parliament of France; they refused to listen to her remonstrances, as she had once refused to heed theirs; and Mary was destined never more to see her son, or the city which she had embellished with the fine arts. She next chose the imperial town of Cologne for her place of residence; it was free and neutral, and there she at last found refuge.

The king, whose heart was naturally good, but weak, would not have suffered his mother to remain in exile and abandonment, but for the insinuations of the vindictive and ambitious cardinal, who persuaded him that she favoured and conspired with the enemies of France; and the indigence and misery in which Mary de Medicis died leaves an ineffaceable stain upon the memory of Louis XIII. and his crowned sisters, which no reasons, moral or political, can excuse.

Her goods were confiscated, her remittances stopped, and she was obliged to dismiss all her faithful servants. During the severe winter of 1642, which was the last of her existence, she was not even provided with fuel, but was reduced to the

necessity of burning tables, boxes, and chairs. The vexations and privations which resulted from her poverty brought on a dropsical complaint in the chest, as well as other diseases, and this complication of evils terminated her deplorable career, at the age of sixty-seven. She was attended in her last moments by the Elector of Cologne, and her body was transported to Saint Denis, where it was interred by the side of Henry IV.

The history of this unfortunate queen exposes many faults and errors, but the injustice and desertion that poisoned her latter days brings to memory her good qualities and merits. Generous in her friendships, she would have sacrificed her best interests for those whom she honoured with her attachment; but she rarely displayed any signs of tenderness for her son; it is said that during the four years of her regency she was never once seen to caress him: nevertheless she solaced the unfortunate, and was affable to her inferiors.

After her death her misfortunes excited pity, but none could deny that her own imperious and obstinate character had brought a great portion of her misery upon her. The king bitterly reproached the cardinal for the privations his mother had endured, and Richelieu, whose power was wavering

at the period of her death, by way of amends presented Louis XIII. with the Palais Cardinal (now the Palais Royal), ordered a magnificent Requiem to be performed in honour of her memory at Terascon, as well as at Paris, and spoke of her as if he had shortly intended to restore her to France and regain her good graces. It is true that, when dying, she pardoned him; but the pope's nuncio, who exhorted her to do so, endeavoured also to persuade her to send him, as a sign of reconciliation, a bracelet which she wore on her arm; but Mary, impatiently turning aside, exclaimed, "Non, c'est trop." The cardinal would doubtless have been much gratified with this mark of esteem, by which he could have justified his conduct to the king.

In the protection which Mary de Medicis afforded to literature and the fine arts, she proved herself a true daughter of Medicis. Some proofs of her portrait, which she engraved herself, and gave her painter, Philip de Champagne, are still in preservation. She recompensed Malherbe, encouraged the chevalier Marini, and built the beautiful palace of Luxembourg, in which she resided until her banishment. This residence, which was erected after the plan of the palace of Pitti in Florence, recalled to Mary the recollection of her own beau-

tiful country; she therefore took delight in embellishing it, and commissioned Rubens to execute the numerous allegorical paintings which have so long decorated its galleries. She built several works of public utility, such as the aqueduct at Arcueil, and three hospitals; she also founded the convent of the Filles du Calvaire, and planted the promenade known by the name of the *Cours la Reine.*

Mary de Medicis had three sons: the eldest was Louis XIII.; the second, Gaston Duke of Orleans; and another, who died young: and three daughters —one of whom married Victor Amadée, and was sovereign duchess of Savoy; another was the wife of Philip IV. of Spain; and the third married the unfortunate Charles I. of England.

QUEEN AND REGENT ANNE OF AUSTRIA.

(Reign of Louis XIII.)

FIVE years after the death of Henry IV., Mary de Medicis resolved upon an alliance with Spain by the double marriage of the Princess Elizabeth of France with the Prince Royal of Spain, and the infanta Anne with Louis XIII. Accordingly, in 1615 the Duke of Mayenne and the Count of Pui-

sieux were sent to Madrid to demand her hand in the name of the king, and the contract was concluded. Anne of Austria could not conceal the joy she experienced at the prospect of her marriage, and her youthful imagination created brilliant illusions, which, however, were soon dissipated. The Duke of Guise, at the head of a detachment, conducted the Princess Elizabeth, destined for Philip IV., to the frontiers, and escorted the young Queen of France to Bordeaux, where the king met her, and they received the nuptial benediction from the hands of the Bishop of Saintes. The entertainments on the occasion gave the French and Spaniards an opportunity of displaying their splendour, in which they endeavoured to outvie each other, and the period of this double hymen was entitled *l'année des magnificences.*

Anne of Austria was the daughter of Philip III. of Spain and of Margaret of Austria, and was born at Valladolid in 1601, five days before the husband for whom she was destined, but for whom the result proved that she was ill calculated. She had a majestic carriage, a great quantity of light hair, which she powdered, blue eyes, an aquiline nose, a small vermilion-coloured mouth, fair complexion, and hands and arms that were celebrated

for their beauty throughout all the courts of Europe.

Louis XIII. found much to admire in his young wife, but Anne entertained no affection for Louis: that prince, naturally cold, soon became indifferent to her charms, and Anne, though taught by Madame de Chevreuse, widow of the Duke of Luynes, that a woman, though she does not love herself, should always endeavour to be beloved, employed but insufficient means to win his regard. Moreover, their union was interfered with by persons who aspired to the exclusive confidence of the king, as well as by the queen-mother, Mary de Medicis, who inspired Louis with suspicions on account of her attachment to her family, and insinuated to the queen that her husband disliked her; so that their whole life was a continual divorce, which was occasionally interrupted by some reunions, the result of circumstances rather than affection.

From the commencement of her marriage Anne of Austria experienced deep mortification from having been obliged to dismiss all her Spanish attendants but one, called Estefania, and replace them by French persons; some of them had attended her from childhood, and she could not conceal her discontent at this imperious order.

Louis saw with anxiety her attachment to the house of Austria, but would not have blamed her for corresponding with her father and brother in Spain, if she had not excited suspicion towards her communications by concealing them, and also by addressing letters to known enemies of France. This augmented the king's indifference, and Anne of Austria enjoyed little happiness during her married life. Some of her historians assert that she gave Louis other causes for his neglect, both in regard of her friendship for the Duke of Montmorenci, and for Gaston, Duke of Orleans. She is also accused of having favoured the advances of the Duke of Buckingham, who was sent to Paris in 1625, by Charles I., as ambassador. This nobleman was gay and presumptuous; moreover, he possessed immense wealth and a magnificent establishment. The love he affected to feel for the queen gave great umbrage to the cardinal, for Buckingham publicly spoke of it, and accompanied his declarations with most imprudent attentions, until the king himself suspected his young wife, and Richelieu augmented his suspicions and increased his anxiety by persuading him that her intimacy with that nobleman would be injurious to the French nation: perhaps his motives were just

and national, but they brought upon him the hatred of the queen.

The Duke of Buckingham, when recalled to England, instead of taking leave of the queen in the ordinary form, went into her apartment, fell on his knees by her bedside, and gave way to the most extravagant expressions of grief, so that she was obliged to reprove him and inform him that it was a great innovation on the rules of etiquette to address the Queen of France in that style; several contemporary writers, however, assert that she gave him a pair of diamond eaglets on that occasion. The duke was sent to the succour of Rochelle, which was occupied by the Protestants and attacked by Richelieu, who entreated the queen to write and request that nobleman to delay the departure of the auxiliary fleet for a few days; Buckingham had the weakness to consent to her request, and during the delay Richelieu gained a victory, after a siege of twelve months.

It is said that the cardinal himself was in love with Anne of Austria; that it was jealousy which caused his hatred of Buckingham, as well as his close surveillance of her conduct; and that he not only addressed letters of tenderness to her, but also employed Madame Fargis to assure her of his de-

votion. But the queen ridiculed his passion. Her confidant, Madame de Chevreuse, who had also refused to listen to the minister's professions, one day asked her mistress if she would like to see the prelate dance a saraband in her apartment; and the imprudent queen, delighted at the prospect of the comedy, determined to make a little fête on the occasion. At the invitation of Madame de Chevreuse, the amorous minister accepted this singular engagement, and appeared in the queen's apartment dressed in green pantaloons with small silver bells suspended from his knee-ribands; Boccau, the celebrated violinist, was summoned, and Cardinal Richelieu played the castagnettes and danced a saraband to Boccau's music: several young courtiers were concealed behind the draperies of the room, and this burlesque scene excited the laughter of the whole court.

The cardinal was vindictive. He augmented the differences between the royal pair, and accused the queen and Madame de Chevreuse of having been accessories in the conspiracy formed by Henry de Talleyrand, Prince of Chalais. This young man held the office of master of the wardrobe, and was arrested by the minister on suspicion of having formed a plot to dethrone the king and annul his

marriage, in order to enable his brother Gaston to marry the queen and ascend the throne. Chalais was beheaded, and his accomplices were exiled. Madame de Chevreuse was ordered to retire to her estate of Dampierre, in Lorraine, and in this comparatively slight punishment the cardinal certainly displayed the indulgence of a lover, although she had ridiculed his passion. The queen, whose participation in this conspiracy is very doubtful, underwent a severe mortification from being implicated in it, as Louis XIII. obliged her to be present at the trial, and with a bitter smile reproached her in open court for having desired another husband. "Je n'aurai pas assez gagné au change," she disdainfully replied, but she wept bitterly, and entertained a most violent hatred of Richelieu for having brought that humiliation upon her.

Wearied with the society of her cold and indifferent husband, as also with the monotony of the court, and desiring a residence of her own, away from the scrutinising eye of the cardinal, Anne founded the convent of Val-de-Grace, at Paris, in which she reserved apartments for herself. She granted several privileges to that community; amongst others, that of bearing the arms of France, and of receiving the hearts of princes and

princesses of the blood royal. In the seclusion of this establishment she passed her days with those inmates whose society she preferred, and who joined with her in her prayers for an heir to the throne.

This queen had been married twenty-two years before she gave birth to the dauphin, Louis XIV., but some historians assert that in 1629 she was delivered of a son, who is supposed to have been the mysterious personage known under the name of the *Iron-mask*, and whom they believe to be the son of the Duke of Orleans, or Buckingham, or Cardinal Mazarin.

Whether this conjecture with regard to the unfortunate child is correct or otherwise, it is certain that there was some powerful reason for the method in which he was brought up, the precautions of which he was the object, and the mystery in which the circumstances of his birth are enveloped. It is, however, much more probable, as well as more honourable to the queen's memory, to believe that this person was the twin-brother of Louis XIV., in which case political motives required all the secrecy which was observed; whereas, had he been an illegitimate son of Anne of Austria, it would have been unnecessary.

He was first confided to the care of a nurse, who was informed that he was the son of a nobleman of high rank, and afterwards placed by Cardinal Mazarin under the charge of Monsieur de Saint-Mars, with whom he lived until that gentleman's death. At the age of twenty this young man eagerly entreated his guardian to give him some information respecting his parentage, which Saint-Mars invariably refused, and at length, by dint of unwearied perseverance, he discovered a casket in which was some correspondence between Louis XIV. and Cardinal Mazarin, which, with the portrait of the queen, whom he strongly resembled, served to throw some light on his origin. In consequence of this discovery, Louis XIV. sent him to the islands of Saint-Margaret, and obliged him under pain of death always to wear a black velvet mask, so as to conceal his features. This unfortunate man spent all his life in captivity.

When Louis XIV. was established on the throne, and the absence of the mask from France was not necessary, the king ordered Saint-Mars to transfer his prisoner to the Bastille, where, confined in that fortress, this mysterious person was the object of particular care. He was served on gold and silver plate, and regaled in princely style; the governor

and officers of the Bastille, and even the haughty Louvais himself, always addressed him standing and uncovered. At length after a captivity of nearly fifty years, he terminated his monotonous career in the Bastille in 1703, and was buried in the cemetery of Saint Paul, after his countenance had been entirely disfigured by mutilation.

During the reigns of Louis XIV. and Louis XV. the public was deceived by various false reports which were spread abroad, asserting that the prisoner was the Duke of Monmouth, Fouquet, the superintendent of finances, the Duke of Beaufort, the Count of Vermondois, and the secretary of the Duke of Mantua; but they were so various, that none were believed. Moreover, Louis XIV. was not cruel, and unless it was under circumstances of such serious consequence as the reputation of his mother, or the stability of his royal power, it is very improbable that he would have authorised this severe treatment of an unoffending person. After his death, the walls of his prison were demolished and searched, his dresses and linen burned, his plate melted, and numerous false reports and pamphlets respecting him intentionally scattered among the public.

All these precautions are sufficient indications

to posterity that it was his brother whom Louis XIV. thus treated; and some documents written by Monsieur de Saint-Mars, and recently discovered in the archives of the minister of foreign affairs, powerfully support the opinion. Perhaps that is one of the causes for the great influence which Cardinal Mazarin possessed over the queen, who doubtless confided to him her secret, if she did not give him her heart.

After the humiliating reproaches which Anne of Austria received from Louis, on account of the conspiracy of Chalais, and her withdrawal to Val-de-Grace, the king's existence was not less dull than her own. Those whom he honoured with his friendship were soon disgusted, because they were obliged to pass their time in puerile amusements, or to listen to his perpetual murmurs against his minister. He was separated from his mother, whom he retained in exile, prejudiced against his wife, jealous of his brother, in continual distrust of the nobles who surrounded him, and seeing only with the eyes of Richelieu, whom he detested, but without whom he thought himself incapable of reigning.

Thus, friendless and unhappy, he acquired a taste for the society of some women, who cannot

be called mistresses, for he loved them only for the pleasure of confidence. His attachments to Mademoiselle Hautefort and Mademoiselle Lafayette were founded on sentiments of friendship, and consisted in the pure enjoyment of their conversation and society. The first friendship of this kind that Louis formed was with Mary de Rohan, wife of the Duke de Luynes; it, however, lasted but a short time, and then changed into hatred, because he discovered that she loved the Duke de Chevreuse, whom she married after De Luynes' death.

The king's next friendship was for Clara, daughter of Marshal Hautefort, and of Renée de Bellay. She was born at Poitiers, in 1616, at the period of her father's death, and had hardly attained her fifteenth year when she entered the service of Mary de Medicis, in the capacity of maid of honour, under the care of her grandmother, Madame Flotte, who was dame d'atours to Anne of Austria. She was not particularly talented, but very amiable, and so pious, that at court she was designated *Sainte Hautefort.* Without being a decided beauty, her appearance was extremely attractive; she had large brilliant blue eyes, a bright colour, light auburn hair, and an elegant figure.

When Mary de Medicis was exiled at Moulins

by the all-powerful Cardinal Richelieu, in 1631, Clara de Hautefort accompanied her, but, the king having expressed his disappointment at losing her society, the minister sent for her, and appointed her dame d'atours to Anne of Austria, in the place of Madame Flotte. The king visited her daily, and, although his attentions consisted only in conversing with and consulting her, the queen manifested some signs of jealousy, which threatened Mademoiselle Hautefort with her displeasure. She however avoided everything that could occasion Anne of Austria any vexation, and paid her such unremitting and skilful attentions, that she gained her confidence and affection.

At that time Louis had acquired another favourite in Mademoiselle Lafayette, whose influence over him was too extensive to be gratifying to the cardinal minister, and he encouraged Clara de Hautefort to inspire the king with a dislike to her. That young lady was, however, an entire stranger to intrigue, and in consequence she and her confidant Mademoiselle de Chemerault were dismissed from the court by the prelate, and retired to the convent of Maddelonnettes. The weak monarch submitted to this affront in silence, and became much more assiduous in his attentions to

Mademoiselle Lafayette. The minister, who was uneasy on account of this attachment, recalled Mademoiselle de Hautefort, for whom he professed a passion, and even offered her the title of duchess; but his offers were rejected with disdain, as she detested the minister.

Louis XIII., fearing to displease the cardinal, paid clandestine visits to Clara, who was still honoured with the friendship and confidence of the queen, which was a new cause of resentment to Richelieu, who availed himself of every opportunity to display his dislike for her, and to endeavour to create the same feeling in the heart of the monarch. She, however, retained his favour for some time, in opposition to the minister, whose support she disdained. But Louis had a suspicious disposition: friendship with him was not always the result of esteem. He loved without esteeming, and esteemed without loving; and as esteem is imperious, it gave Richelieu that ascendency over his sovereign which he unceasingly possessed, notwithstanding all the efforts of those he loved. The monarch, therefore, on finding that Clara was the friend of his wife, as well as of himself, became jealous because he was not loved exclusively, and, like all persons who are attacked with

that malady, imagined that he was despised and ridiculed by both wife and favourite.

Several quarrels and reconciliations were the consequence of Clara's affection for her royal mistress, and one day, after some disagreement, Louis had the weakness to threaten her with the resentment of the cardinal, and accordingly addressed a letter to Richelieu, in which he set forth all his complaints against his favourite. When the letter was folded, he showed it to her, saying, "Voilà votre scène que je fais à Monsieur le Cardinal." Clara immediately sprang forward, seized the letter, and concealed it in her bosom; then extending her arms, she exclaimed, "Prenez-la, tant que vous voudrez maintenant," well knowing that the bashful monarch would never attempt to seek the letter in so singular an asylum.

Whether it was from antipathy to his wife, or from the fear of having unworthily bestowed his confidence, Louis withdrew his attentions from Mademoiselle de Hautefort, and attached himself more closely than ever to Mademoiselle Lafayette, who was a pretty brunette; but though much less beautiful than Clara, she had the merit of repaying his fondness by a sincere affection. His only pleasure appeared to consist in hearing her con-

verse and sing, and he sought in her society those consolations which the vexations caused him by the imperious cardinal rendered so necessary. This platonic love caused the queen no uneasiness, and Anne of Austria entertained great friendship for Mademoiselle de Lafayette. This young lady was the only daughter of John de Lafayette and Margaret de Bourbon Busset; her modesty and high birth rendered her a desirable attendant for the queen, and at the age of eighteen she was appointed maid of honour.

Richelieu had chosen Joseph de Tremblay to be Louis XIII.'s confessor. This man was talented, artful, and ambitious, and conceived the bold project of supplanting the cardinal, to effect which he obtained the assistance of his cousin Louisa Mary de Lafayette, and both strove to undermine the power of the prelate, who, skilful politician as he was, soon discovered the error he had committed in suffering two relatives to be the intimates of the king. Père Joseph failed in his perilous enterprise, and Richelieu entertained great animosity for the royal favourite, whom he endeavoured by every means to remove from the court.

At this period, 1637, Anne of Austria, who had sought consolation in her sadness by corresponding

with her brother, the King of Spain, and several persons at the courts of Madrid and Brussels, was accused by the cardinal of intriguing against the king and state. Louis was easily persuaded of his wife's criminality, and resolved, at the instigation of the minister, to detect and punish her. He accordingly gave order to the chancellor Seguier, who proceeded to the convent of Val-de-Grace, where he broke open the closets in her apartment, searched the drawers and boxes, seized all her papers, interrogated the nuns and the queen herself, and even obliged her to deliver up a letter which she had concealed about her person. At the same time he arrested and imprisoned all her faithful attendants, and Anne was constrained to follow her husband to Chantilly, where she was closely confined in her own chamber, and attended only by a few persons who were absolutely necessary for her service.

As disgrace is contagious, the courtiers avoided all who were considered attached to her; it was remarked that in crossing the court-yard of the palace no persons even dared to turn their eyes towards the windows of her apartment, and it was publicly reported that she was to be sent back to Spain;—a singular menace after a twenty years'

marriage! The queen's agents denied all knowledge of the clandestine correspondence imputed to her; and, notwithstanding the threats of Richelieu, who questioned them like a man bent on finding them culpable, and who, to terrify them into an avowal, placed the instruments of torture before their eyes, they still remained steadfast to their assertions of entire ignorance.

The queen, who had been reprimanded in open council on the occasion of Chalais' conspiracy, had been obliged to sign a paper by which she acknowledged that she had been guilty of an imprudence; for when Richelieu could not find sufficient proofs of criminality against the objects of his hatred, one of his plans of policy was to procure a document against them, in case of a relapse, or a new opportunity for accusation. But his ill-will on this occasion, though carried to extremes, was without effect; and it was believed that the chancellor must have secretly warned the queen of the search he was about to make, for they found nothing in the escritoirs at Val-de-Grace but useless papers, and in the closets several sackcloth garments and monastic scourges, which it was believed were placed there in derision of the cardinal. The queen was at length permitted to return to Paris, and Richelieu,

as was his usual custom, took the credit of having befriended her throughout the affair, and also of having, through his solicitations, restored her to the king's favour.

But the reconciliation of Louis XIII. and Anne of Austria was in reality the result of the remonstrances of Mademoiselle de Lafayette, whose conduct offers a model of virtue rarely to be found in history. Sensible of the king's affection for her, she loved him, interested herself in his glory, and was desirous of restoring happiness to him in the bosom of his family, as well as in his kingdom; but Louis's pusillanimity prevented the accomplishments of her desires. When he beheld himself surrounded with intrigues, he believed it was impossible to overcome them without the aid of his minister; while every other person believed that it was his minister who encompassed him with the troubles like nets, to oblige him to retain his services, and that upon his absence all difficulties would be surmounted. But it was difficult to impress those ideas upon the king's mind without Richelieu perceiving it, and still more difficult to prevent him from eradicating them; and Mademoiselle Lafayette acknowledged with grief that Louis was conscious of his chain, but believed it

indispensable, and that to preserve the monarch's favour she must submit to partake of his bondage. Too proud to be dependent upon the will of any but that of her sovereign, and moreover feeling alarmed for her virtue, she determined to break an attachment the result of which she feared would be injurious to the happiness of both. She herself recounts that Louis, who was usually very reserved, one day offered her an apartment at Versailles, where he could visit her more freely, and that he made this offer with a warmth and tenderness of manner that surprised her. Mademoiselle Lafayette does not say that she partook of the king's emotion, but she confesses that she loved him, and that after some remonstrances he apologised to her for giving away to the transports of his passion; that she was ashamed of having occasioned it, and considered that the best means of securing them both against their mutual weakness was to separate; moreover she thought she could serve the king better by her friendly advice when in a convent free from the investigation of the minister. She accordingly retired to that of the Visitation, at Paris.

The king urged her not to take the veil, and confessed that his consent to her retirement from court cost him much sorrow; and Richelieu, who had

hastened her retreat, by fortifying Louis's scruples, gained nothing, for, although the latter left Paris, and went to reside at Grosbois, he saw her more frequently than ever, feeling that they were safe from all indiscretion by the position that his respected and much beloved friend had chosen; and she, being beyond the cardinal's displeasure, and having nothing to lose, spoke her sentiments and gave him her advice more freely.

The king's visits to the parlour of the Visitation were so long and so frequent, that they caused Richelieu infinite anxiety, and, despairing of dissolving a tie which was strengthened by gentle familiarity and true friendship, sought amongst Louis's most intimate attendants a spy who could discover all that passed between the monarch and the favourite. His choice fell upon a valet-de-chambre called Boisinval. This perfidious servant repeated all their conversation to the cardinal, and even procured him the letters which Louis wrote and received from Mademoiselle de Lafayette; some of them he suppressed, others falsified, and introduced into them expressions which he knew would wound; and thus succeeded in creating discontent and coldness between them, which so much piqued the pride of both, that they ceased to see

each other, without deigning to explain the reason why.

The queen, who was much attached to Mademoiselle de Lafayette, was exceedingly grieved at this estrangement between her friend and the king, for, although she had never displayed the same attachment for Anne of Austria as Mademoiselle de Hautefort had done, she had rendered her much greater services in the efforts she had made to reconcile her husband to her.

The sad and valetudinary Louis, after a shor separation, felt once more inclined to call at the parlour of the Visitation without the knowledge of the cardinal, where he held a long conversation with Mademoiselle de Lafayette, who had discovered Richelieu's intrigue, and fully explained to him that they had been the subjects of the minister's treachery; and at the same time profited by the ascendency she gained over the king in the discovery, by destroying the unhappy prejudices he had conceived against his wife, and effecting the reunion of the royal pair. She was so urgent on the occasion, and entreated him so warmly to be reunited to her, that Louis, who had remained at the convent too late to return to Grosbois that night, left her with the promise to repair to his

wife's apartment in the Louvre; and the consequences of this reunion, after twelve years of total estrangement and twenty-two of sterility, was the birth of the dauphin, afterwards Louis XIV., in 1638.

The queen, who gratefully acknowledged the kind offices of Mademoiselle de Lafayette, exerted all her efforts to prevent the consummation of her vows; but her endeavours were fruitless, as also the prayers of the king, which, finding it difficult to resist, she put an end to by immediately taking the veil in the convent of the Visitation, where she lived esteemed by all, after giving the world the example of a young girl, who, in the age of passion and surrounded by temptations, generously immolated herself, not only to escape crime, but also to avoid drawing the monarch whom she loved into the same offence. This virtuous Visitandine died in 1665, at the convent of Saint Marie de Chaillat, of which she was the benefactress.

In 1640 Anne of Austria gave birth to a second son, the Duke of Anjou (afterwards of Orleans), at Saint Germain; but she lived on very indifferent terms with her husband, who always retained his resentment against her, and, as he found his end approaching, expressed the greatest repugnance

towards leaving the regency in her hands. He even banished his confessor Sirmond for having proposed to him to confer that dignity upon the queen. Of all the wounds which he declared he had suffered at the hand of Anne of Austria, that which affected him most was the part she had taken in the affair of Chalais; he always reproached her with having desired his death, and when, seeing her husband about to descend into the tomb, the queen entreated him to discard that odious idea, he remarked to Chavigni, "Dans l'état où je suis, je dois lui pardonner, mais je ne suis pas obligé de la croire."

With this prejudice, added to subsequent intrigues which he believed she had been concerned in, the persuasion that she was incapable of governing, and her attachment to Spain, it is not surprising that Louis XIII. was desirous of excluding Anne of Austria from the regency; but he sought in vain for a substitute, having no greater esteem for his brother than for his wife, both of whom he had been led by his minister to dislike. He enumerated Gaston's faults, amongst which he charged him with ingratitude and treason, and concluded by declaring him unfit for any appointment in the kingdom, above all the regency. This withering

declaration was registered a few days after Louis's death.

Necessity at length obliged him to act in opposition to his wishes. Richelieu was no longer alive to consult; and in 1642 Anne of Austria was named regent and the Duke of Orleans lieutenant-general of the kingdom; but neither of them could perform any important act without the concurrence of a sovereign council, which he created, and prohibited them from changing. This council was composed of Cardinal Mazarin, and Monsieurs Seguier, de Bouthilier, and de Chavigni, with the Prince of Condé at their head.

After making his wife and brother swear to abide by his wishes, he signed the decree, and wrote beneath it with his own hand, "Ce qui est dessus est ma très expresse et dernière volonté, que je veux être exécutée." A month after, Louis breathed his last sigh, little regretted in death, as he had been little loved in life.

He had taken every precaution to limit the power of his wife, who from the time the decree was made had incessantly thought about the best means of setting aside the restriction of her power which had been instituted by the dying king, who had

scarcely passed from the world before his widow arrived with a brilliant escort, made her triumphal entry into Paris, and immediately repaired to the house of Parliament to procure the abrogation of the king's will.

The Prince of Condé yielded his power at the instigation of his wife, who was the queen's intimate friend, upon the promise of superior advantages. To induce Seguier and the others to abandon their power, Anne of Austria offered them the same authority under another title; as for the Duke of Orleans, she possessed sufficient influence over him to lead him as she liked: accordingly, in the year 1643, in presence of the young king Louis XIV., the Duke of Orleans, and the peers of France, Anne of Austria was declared regent of the kingdom and guardian of her son without restriction, and at liberty to form her council by her own will; and thus Louis XIII.'s *très expresse et dernière volonté* was respected!

The queen's next act was to recall those friends who had been exiled, amongst whom were the Duchess de Chevreuse and the Marquis de Châteauneuf, both of whom the late king had prohibited from ever reappearing at court. She also recalled Clara de Hautefort, who was exiled by

Richelieu in 1637, on suspicion of having, in order to serve the queen, transmitted to her secretary Laporte, at the Bastille, the replies he was to make to his examiners, at the period when the queen was accused of conspiring with the Spaniards. As Clara's generosity deserved better treatment, the king was universally blamed for suffering her banishment to take place; but she suffered with resignation, and retired at first to a convent, but, not finding a monastical life agreeable, she quitted it for the country. The queen had never forgotten the services which Clara rendered her during the Cardinal's life, and penned with her own hand these words: "Venez, ma chère amie; je meurs d'impatience de vous embrasser." She also sent her own carriage to fetch Mademoiselle de Hautefort, and reinstated her in her former situation of *dame d'atours*.

Some time after, Clara, whose morality was rigidly strict, and whowas desirous of saving the reputation of her mistress, ventured to make some observations to her respecting the attachment she manifested for Mazarin, and the power she placed in his hands; but Anne, though kind hearted and of an obliging disposition, would not suffer her most familiar friends to direct her. Having become

mistress of herself, and at liberty to follow her own tastes, she declared firmly that she would not be restrained in her choice of confidants, nor exposed to remonstrances or criticisms. Mademoiselle de Hautefort, who had known her only under oppression, was unprepared for such a reprimand, and she found, too late, that her remarks were so unwelcome to the queen, that she was again exiled in 1644, and never forgiven.

Being then only thirty years of age, and enjoying an unsullied reputation, Clara de Hautefort was asked in marriage by Charles de Schomberg, Duke of Halluyn, Marshal of France, to whom she was united in the year 1646. At the expiration of ten years, having had the misfortune to lose her husband, with whom she had lived happily, she resolved on spending the remainder of her life in retirement; but her character for wisdom and virtue was so universally admitted, that Louis XIV. wrote her two successive letters, one dated from Valenciennes, and the other from Versailles, requesting her to accept the title and office of dame d'honneur to the queen Marie Thérèse: "Afin de remettre à la cour la dignité et la grandeur qu'on commençait à n'y plus voir." Madame Schomberg thanked the king, but refused his offer on account of her ad-

vanced age. She afterwards retired to the convent of La Madelaine du Trainel, at Paris, where she lived universally esteemed, and died much regretted in 1691, aged seventy-five years. She left no family.

The queen, whose stormy regency proved so great a calamity for France, assumed little appearance of regret at the loss of her husband, and even during the period of mourning constantly frequented the theatre, of which she was passionately fond. The curate of Saint Germain l'Auxerrois vainly observed to her the impropriety of such unseasonable recreation; but her more complaisant courtiers were of a contrary opinion, and the queen preferred their advice, as according better with her own inclinations. Nevertheless, when at Saint Germain she led a very regular life, and even appointed fixed hours for her walks and drives, but she never rose before noon. She also observed her religious duties with rigorous exactitude.

Anne of Austria at first displayed some antipathy for Cardinal Mazarin, because he was one of those who wisely counselled the king to limit the power of the regent; she carried her resentment on account of that advice so far as to nominate her almoner, Auguste Potier, Bishop of Beauvais,

prime minister, although he was indolent, inexperienced, and in every respect incapable of conducting the affairs of state.

But Mazarin, whom Louis XIII. had chosen as godfather to the dauphin, by his persuasive and skilful manners soon gained an entire empire over the mind of Anne of Austria, who had so high an opinion of his sagacity and talents, that she considered him alone capable of supplying her own insufficiency; moreover, she was aware that he held the key of foreign affairs, and he therefore replaced Potier in the ministry. His influence was such, that to satisfy him she even sacrificed two of her most intimate friends—the Duchesses of Chevreuse and Montbazon, who were exiled.

The commencement of Anne's regency was exceedingly brilliant in consequence of the victories gained by the Prince of Condé, particularly that of the battle of Rocroy in 1646. But these fair days did not last long. Mazarin was hated because he knew not how to attract either esteem or confidence, which are the pivots of government; he burthened the nation with taxes, and the numerous court intrigues caused the queen to multiply the odious *lettres de cachet*. This excess of evil roused the turbulent spirits, who excited the people to re-

volt against the government of a Spanish queen and an Italian cardinal; the parliament declined to register their vexatious edicts, and remonstrated with the regent, who refused to heed them. The murmurs against her were incessant, for her reputation was not only sullied with suspicions injurious to her honour, but she was openly blamed for placing all her confidence in a foreigner who could hardly speak the language of the country he attempted to govern.

Thus Anne provoked an insurrection, which broke out upon the cardinal imprisoning three of the most popular of the councillors. Such was the origin of the Fronde, which commenced in 1648. The streets of Paris were barricaded, and the outraged people with furious cries demanded the liberation of the prisoners Broussel, Charton, and Potier de Blanc Menit. Mazarin trembled for the consequences of this revolt; but the queen, more courageous, shut herself in the Palais Royal, which she inhabited with the young king, and sent a regiment of Swiss and French guards to put down the rebels. The coadjutor Retz, who was an instigator of the rebellion, appeared in the queen's presence dressed in his pontifical robes, and informed her that the sedition was caused by the detention of the parlia-

mentary councillors. "C'est être soi-même coupable de rebellion," replied Anne of Austria, courageously, "que de croire qu'on puisse se révolter contre le roi ; vous voudriez que je donasse la liberté à Broussel, mais je l'étranglerai plûtot de mes deux mains."

Mazarin, who attempted to address some words of peace to the people, was received with a shower of stones, and the queen, who energetically sustained the power of which she had made so bad a use, declared that she would never open the gates of the prisoners until the people had thrown down their arms and dispersed; they accordingly yielded to her will, and Broussel, who was set at liberty, triumphantly re-entered Paris in one of the royal carriages.

Nevertheless the storm continued gradually to increase; many noblemen of the court embraced the party of the Fronde, and determined on the dismissal of Mazarin; and Anne, who obstinately insisted on retaining her favourite minister in opposition to all France, was obliged in 1649 to leave Paris furtively in the middle of the night, and retire to Saint Germain with the young king, who was then ten years of age. She was accompanied by the Duke of Orleans, the Prince of Condé, and all the royal family, as also the author of the evil,

Cardinal Mazarin, with whom she was living on terms of the greatest intimacy, and whom the antiquarian Dulaure asserts that she secretly married.

The court fled so precipitately from Paris, that they found themselves, in the middle of a severe winter, without furniture, clothes, or provisions, and exposed to the greatest privations; so that those who were not, like the queen and the cardinal, sustained by anger and the hope of vengeance, earnestly desired peace before the war had commenced. The regent's measures were so badly arranged, that in leaving Paris she did not even think of securing to herself the Bastille, which could have kept the town in order, but left it occupied by twenty-two thousand soldiers, who were without bread or ammunition, under the command of Tremblay, brother of the celebrated Father Joseph: that fortress was accordingly taken. The irritated queen at length resolved to blockade Paris, hoping to bring the people to submission by famine. The parliament sent a deputation, but she refused to receive it, replying that on the day following the town would be besieged by twenty-five thousand men.

At this period the English parliament, under Oliver Cromwell, decapitated their sovereign, Charles I.; and his widow, who was daughter of Henry the

Great, fled with her daughter to Paris, where they lived in a state of the most profound misery, wanting even fuel during the severity of the winter. The appearance of her sister-in-law in this desolate state was a grave lesson for the queen, who, with Mazarin, endeavoured to win over the heads of the revolt by promising a cardinal's hat to one, a government to another, and money to several; and after a slight combat at the Porte Saint-Antoine, Condé and his troops entered Paris: the king offered an entire amnesty, and the Frondeurs dispersed.

Four months after these events the court returned to Paris, and such was the volatile nature of the people, that they displayed the most lively signs of rejoicing on the queen's entry into the capital, and even kissed her robe, although Mazarin was at her side.

The days which followed were too bright and peaceful to last in those times of agitation, and various court intrigues determined the arrest and imprisonment of the Duke of Longueville and the Prince of Condé, who, twelve months before, had so successfully defended the regent. The news of this arrest again threw France into confusion: the parliament claimed their liberation; the discon-

tented reunited against Mazarin, who fled from Paris; and the queen, made prisoner in the Palais Royal, was obliged to set the princes at liberty, and give an unwilling dismissal to her favourite minister. She vainly endeavoured to hasten a second time from Paris under favour of night, but all the doors and avenues of the palace were guarded, and several of the people, who feared that the king had been privately removed from the town, demanded the satisfaction of seeing him. The queen accordingly opened the doors of his sleeping apartment, and the crowd entered, but, imposing silence and the circumspection of respect on one another, they gazed with a kind of avidity on their young sovereign, whose youthful graces were embellished by the calm of a profound sleep.

Anne could not live happily without the cardinal, and by unwearied exertions obtained his recall, but it was to her own disadvantage; for, with the view of maintaining his influence at court when the majority of Louis would place the reins of government in his hands, he paid homage to the young king, and endeavoured to create a difference between him and his mother; and from that period 1651, Mazarin absorbed all public authority, and preserved it until his death. It was, no doubt, this

ungrateful conduct that, in some measure, caused Anne of Austria to reject the thought of Louis XIV.'s marriage with Marie Mancini, the cardinal's niece, with so much indignation: "Si le roi faisait un tel mariage," she said with her usual energy to the ambitious prelate, "je m'unirais à la France contre mon fils, et contre vous."

In 1654 she dismissed Marie Mancini from court, and negociated Louis XIV.'s marriage with her niece, Marie Thérèse, the Infanta of Spain. France was weary of the long war with Spain, and this union, which was concluded in 1659 by the preliminaries of the treaty of the Pyrenees, was the token of peace. After the king's marriage, Anne of Austria retired from public affairs. In 1661 she learned the death of Mazarin, for whom she had compromised her crown and her dignity, but his loss gave her little pain.

Religious duties occupied the latter years of this once restless spirit. Louis XIV., who entertained profound sentiments of respect for social duties, received his mother's counsel upon all occasions with the greatest deference, notwithstanding she never spared her reproofs on the subject of his neglect of his queen and his public acts of infidelity.

For the space of three years she bore the seeds of death in her bosom in the form of a cancer, and during the last eighteen months of her life this devouring malady almost caused her more cruel sufferings than her courage was equal to sustain. This princess was singularly delicate in all that concerned the care of her person; it was difficult to find cambric or lawn sufficiently fine for her use, so that Cardinal Mazarin jocosely remarked that "En purgatoire sa punition serait de coucher dans des draps de toile d'Hollande."

Anne of Austria experienced many vicissitudes in her life; at one time tormented and mortified by an imperious minister, and an object of compassion to the people, and at another outraged and rebelled against by those very people. Notwithstanding her attachment to Spain, she made war against that country as if she had never loved it; and in her retirement her domestic virtues were such, that she had the satisfaction of seeing the nation do justice to her estimable qualities.

In her malady she offered a terrible example of the fragility of human grandeur and personal charms, which she often remarked herself to the ladies in attendance on her, looking with compassion on her hands and arms, once so beautiful and

much admired. Her greatest consolation was to be surrounded by her family, and, equally occupied in procuring and doing good without interfering with the government, her last days were passed in the calm of virtue.

During her illness she displayed the greatest patience; those who approached her were only aware of her agony by her involuntary movements, and her countenance wore the smile of benevolence to the last. The king, queen, Duke of Anjou, and Madame Henriette were constantly at her side, and with her last breath she was anxious to let them know how agreeable was their care and assiduity, and how much she was consoled by their tears.

The king regretted her sincerely, for she had failed in no point of maternal affection. Notwithstanding the embarrassment which civil war constantly occasioned her during her son's infancy, she presided over his education, assisted in instructing him, and assiduously avoided his forming an acquaintance with any person from whom he could acquire vicious habits. In inspiring him with noble and elevated sentiments, she endeavoured to prevent his being dazzled by the brilliancy of the crown, and engraved on his heart a sincere respect for

religion, which he always revered, even when far from acting according to its principles.

It has been asserted that, by the counsel of a fanatical confessor, when dying she petitioned Louis XIV. for the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which guaranteed protection to the Protestants. If there be any foundation for this assertion, the name of Anne of Austria must have been hateful to the French even after her death.

Daughter, wife, sister, and mother of kings, she possessed all the dignity which belonged to her elevated rank; she was proud, but her manners were exquisitely polished, so that the Marquis de la Fare mentions her epoch as that of the purest gallantry.

Anne was a great admirer of the fine arts; the works which she executed were, the entire restoration of Val-de-Grace, and the dome. Before the birth of Louis XIV., an Augustine monk having predicted that she would have a son, she made a vow to construct a chapel to Notre Dame de Savone. She had not, however, the time to fulfil her intentions, and Louis XIV. accomplished her vow. This queen both loved and encouraged literature. An author having asked her protection to enable him to publish some historical memoirs of that period

without danger, "Ne craignez rien," she said; "je protégerai toujours la vérité."

Her blind attachment to Mazarin is the greatest stain in her government, although she displayed eminent courage in maintaining her adherence to him. Louis XIV. said that his mother, as regent, should be ranked among the greatest kings of the earth; but less partial posterity has not ratified his judgment, for her good qualities were not so numerous as to obliterate the memory of her faults. She expired in 1666, at the age of sixty-five years, and was entombed at St. Denis.

QUEEN MARIA THERESA.

(Reign of Louis XIV.)

MARIA THERESA was the only daughter of Philip IV., King of Spain, and of Elizabeth of France, sister to Louis XIII., and niece of Anne of Austria. She was born at the Escurial in 1638, five days after Louis XIV.

Although endowed with many personal as well as moral advantages, and the issue of blood royal, this princess passed her life in comparative obscurity. Modest and retiring, she had no ambitious views, and was an entire stranger to political affairs.

Gentle, virtuous, and an enemy to intrigue, she spared no efforts to gain the king's affection, but was fortunate enough only to obtain his esteem and friendship.

Louis XIV.'s mother had constantly overlooked his conduct, and, to prevent temptation, did not suffer him to associate with any women of an equivocal reputation. Happy would it have been could she have succeeded in moderating those unruly passions that led him into disorders, which history, the protectress of morality, cannot disguise. The young king, escaping from her surveillance, first professed a predilection for Madame de Beauvais, Duchess of Châtillon, who was thirty-three years older than himself. This lady was consequently dismissed from court by the queen-mother, but through her address was soon re-called, and always possessed great influence with Louis. She spent the last years of her life upon her own estate of Gentilly, which had been given to her by him, and died there in 1687. Her daughter, a model of all the virtues, was the Duchess of Richelieu, the particular friend of Maria Theresa.

Mazarin, whose views were exceedingly ambitious, sent to Italy for his five nieces, who were, like himself, of noble family, and all very beautiful. They

were the daughters of his sister Geronima Mazarini, and Laurent Mancini, a Roman baron. The eldest, Saura Vittoria, was married in 1651 to the Duke of Mercœur, son of the Duke of Vendôme and grandson of Henry the Great; the fourth was united to the Duke of Bouillon; and the fifth, Hortense, was the wife of the Duke of Meilleraie. Olympia, the second sister, was the first to whom Louis was attached, in 1654. She was of the same age as himself, and is described as having been a perfect beauty; her voice was melodious, her language seducing, and the gentleness of her disposition gained her the love of all hearts.

The queen-mother, perceiving the attachment that existed between the young king and Olympia Mancini, endeavoured to break the liaison by proposing a union for her with Eugene Maurice of Savoy, Count de Soissons, to whom she was married in 1657. This separation cost some tears to the young lovers; but Louis, having been attacked with a dangerous illness at Calais, felt hurt at the indifference displayed by the Countess de Soissons, and from that time his affection was transferred from her to her younger sister, Marie Mancini; nevertheless Olympia enjoyed that intimacy with the sovereign which results from an acquaintance formed in

childhood. She resided at court in the quality of superintendent to the queen's household, which office the Cardinal Mazarin created expressly for her. Nothing surpassed the luxury of her apartments, her carriages, and her attendants. She lost immense sums at play, for the king never gave her less than two thousand louis at a time. She resided in the Tuileries, and was the centre of attraction at court, which, like her uncle Mazarin, she ruled over by her art and address. It was in her salons that Louis XIV. acquired those polished manners for which he was so much admired.

In 1665 the Countess de Soissons was exiled, having, either through hatred or jealousy, informed Maria Theresa of the king's attachment to Mademoiselle de la Vallière. She, however, returned to court some time after, from whence she was obliged to fly upon a new charge, having been accused of participating in several acts of poisoning, more especially that of her husband; she accordingly retired to Spain. The young queen of that country ardently desired to see the Countess of Soissons, notwithstanding the opposition of her husband, who urged her not to drink anything in the presence of that lady, unless it had been previously tasted by one of her devoted servants. This precaution was

either neglected or paralysed, and the unfortunate queen died from the effects of poison, after having drunk some milk which was presented to her by the Countess de Soissons. The king immediately sent to arrest her, but she had already disappeared, and directed her flight towards Germany. This evasion is the only argument which can be adduced in support of the accusation, as the interest she could have had in committing such a crime is unknown, or at least doubtful.

The Countess de Soissons died at Brussels, greatly impoverished and little esteemed, in the year 1707; she was the mother of five princes, amongst whom was the commander so celebrated under the name of Prince Eugene.

During the dangerous illness with which the king was attacked at Calais, Marie Mancini manifested great anxiety for his recovery. Although not so beautiful as either of her sisters, she possessed the charm of an amiable disposition; moreover, she loved Louis with a frankness and sincerity which he recompensed by the lively interest he felt for her. Marie was exceedingly clever, and exhibited as much talent in the compilation of a despatch as in the composition of poetry, for which she obtained some little celebrity.

On his recovery, Louis became tenderly attached to his former playmate, and from that time never appeared in public unaccompanied by her; she even followed him into the apartments of Anne of Austria, who vainly expressed the discontent which the presence of his mistress caused her.

Louis more than once hinted his intention of marrying her, and Mazarin, by way of discovering the queen-mother's ideas on the subject, one day said to her, "Je crains bien que le roi ne veuille trop fortement épouser ma nièce;" and it was upon that occasion that she ordered him to break that engagement under pain of incurring her displeasure, and the revolt of all France against him.

In consequence of this declaration, the cardinal, who knew the firmness of her resolution, renounced the brilliant illusion of obtaining a crown for one of his family, and afterwards earnestly endeavoured to persuade the king to forego an attachment which was both prejudicial to his glory and his interests, and seriously occupied himself with negotiating a suitable marriage with a foreign princess.

The queen-mother and the cardinal differed in their choice, which was divided between Maria Theresa and Margaret of Savoy. Anne desired the Infanta, for the double advantage of having a daughter-in-

law of her own blood, and peace with Spain. Mazarin's choice inclined towards the Princess of Savoy, for, having already married one of his nieces to the Count of Soissons, cousin to the Duke of Savoy, and no longer daring to flatter himself with the hope of placing Maria Mancini upon the throne, he thought that at least he would endeavour to raise his relative to that honour by marrying the Princess Margaret to the king. Accordingly he sent to invite the Duke of Savoy and his daughter Margaret to meet the court at Lyon. At the same time, Spain, who had projected a union with France, sent an ambassador (Antonio Pimentello) to Lyon, to offer the Infanta Maria Theresa.

The queen-mother undertook to explain to the Princess of Savoy the motives for preferring an alliance with Spain, and the contract for Louis's marriage with the Infanta was entered into and signed in 1659.

Maria Mancini was desirous of accompanying the court to Lyon, but the will of the queen-mother was predominant on this occasion; moreover, the cardinal wished her to discard hopes that could never be realised, and therefore sent her to a convent at Brouage. The separation of the young lovers was affecting, and the monarch could not restrain

his tears. "Ah, Sire," said Maria, tenderly, "vous pleurez: vous êtes roi, et je pars." After her departure, the king threw himself at his mother's feet to obtain her consent to his marriage with his favourite, thus offering to sacrifice the interests of an alliance with Spain, and cursing the weight of his crown, which exposed him to greater slavery than the lowest peasant in his kingdom. His pathetic appeal almost induced Anne to accede to his wishes; the two young lovers were re-united at Saint-Jean-d'Angeli, and Maria Mancini had already one foot on the throne, when, recovering her natural energy, the queen-mother prepared a fulminating address to the nation: moreover, the Infanta of Spain was approaching the frontiers; was she to receive a mortifying affront, and thus renew the war which her presence in France would conclude? Louis showed himself worthy of the rank he occupied, and the sacrifice was completed in 1660.

The King of France, accompanied by Turenne, met the King of Spain on the frontiers, in the Isle of Conference, and the marriage was celebrated with great pomp at Saint-Jean-de-Luz, by the Bishop of Bayonne. During the ceremony the *dame d'atours*, Madame de Noailles, supported the crown upon the queen's head.

The king and his royal consort repaired to Vincennes, in order to give the Parisians time to make preparations for a magnificent entry into the capital, which took place by the Barrière du Trône. On this occasion the nobility and the bourgeoise rivalled each other in the luxury of their dresses and equipages. Gold and precious stones sparkled on all sides: "Tel qui de deux moulins ne fit qu'un habit." Seventy mules ornamented with gold trappings formed a part of Mazarin's cortège; and his house was so sumptuously ornamented, with even more than royal pomp, that *Monsieur*, who could not entirely excuse it, ironically termed it *fasteuse simplicité*. The youth and beauty of the young couple, and the immense concourse of people, augmented the brilliancy of the fête. Madame de Maintenon (then Madame Scarron), who was among the crowd, in writing a description of it to one of her friends, remarked that for twelve hours she was all ears and eyes; that she could not have believed or imagined a sight so beautiful; and, added she, "The queen ought to be very happy and contented with the husband she has chosen."

The king's marriage did not immediately lessen his sentiments of affection for Maria Mancini, who struggled to overcome her attachment. But the

queen-mother, who was uneasy at the thought of her remaining at court, resolved to marry her to a foreigner in order to remove her from France. She succeeded in effecting a union between her and the Grand Constable of Naples, Lorenzo Onofrio Colonna, in 1661. The ceremony took place at the Louvre, one month after the death of Mazarin: Louis loaded his beloved mistress with presents, and she was conducted to Italy by her husband.

At Rome she met her sister Hortensia, Duchess of Meilleraie, and this sister bestowed very bad counsel on her, for they both quitted their husbands, and, disguised in men's dresses, embarked at Cività Vecchia for Provence, in order to meet their lovers, the Count de Marsau, and the Chevalier de Lorraine, the same who was suspected of having poisoned Madame Henrietta, wife of Philip Duke of Orleans, and sister-in-law to Louis XIV. The Grand Constable having sent a trusty friend to Maria at Marseilles, requesting her to return to him, she replied only by a letter, and continued her journey under the same disguise; accordingly she was arrested at Aix in 1670, and confined by her husband in the Château of Segovie, but by order of Louis was moved to the Abbey of Lys, from whence she escaped to Germany in 1673.

Having become the object of well-merited sarcasms, Maria implored the Grand Constable's pardon, and this too indulgent husband obtained from the pope "une excommunication contre ceux qui parleraient mal de Madame la Connétable." Moreover, he had been recently appointed viceroy of Arragon, and she was desirous of sharing that brilliant position. But, far from being received as she expected, her scandalous conduct caused her to be slighted and avoided; she again left her husband's dwelling, and continued to lead a wandering life, until, her divorce having been pronounced, she retired to a convent in Madrid, where she died, in 1715, aged seventy years. She had two sons, one of whom succeeded his father as Grand Constable of Naples, the other was the Cardinal Colonna. Maria Mancini has left a treatise on meteorological events, and memoirs of her own private life.

For some months the young queen was the only object of Louis's attentions, during which time she occupied the first rank, which a little later was bestowed on his favourite; for, instead of submitting to the royal forms and the fatigues which accompany royalty, Maria Theresa preferred living more calmly and retiredly. In 1661 she gave birth to a daughter, and afterwards was attacked with the

measles, during which malady the king attended her himself so assiduously, that he contracted the disease.

Notwithstanding these marks of tenderness, the queen-mother had remarked that Madame Henrietta and the king partook of an affection, in which Monsieur suffered in his dignity as husband. At all the entertainments and carousals, Louis was the cavalier of Henrietta; at all the balls they danced together; in all Benserade's ballads there were allusions to them which none could misunderstand—the king was the lily, the Duchess of Orleans the rose.

Madame Henrietta, daughter of the unfortunate Charles I. of England, the princess whose life, or rather whose death, has immortalised Bossuet, although at that time only seventeen years of age, bore that beautiful and fatal impress of sadness which characterised the countenances of all the Stuarts. Her form was fragile and delicate; she had her great-grandmother Mary Stuart's swan-like throat, which was of such pure transparency, that a modern author has remarked, "Qu'on eût pu voir à travers couler le poison du Chevalier de Lorraine."

Anne of Austria, who saw with anxiety Louis's attentions to his sister-in-law, judged it time to put

an end to them, and accordingly endeavoured to cure one passion by inspiring another; she therefore in some measure encouraged him in a predilection he had formed for Mademoiselle de la Vallière, judging that from her humble position, and simple and retiring manners, no positive evil could accrue.

Louise Frances de la Beaume-Leblanc, Duchess de la Vallière and de Vaujour, was daughter of the Marquis de la Vallière, and born at Amboise, of which place her father was governor, in 1644. Her mother having on her third marriage united herself with the Marquis de Saint Remi, first maître d'hôtel to the Duke of Orléans, Mademoiselle de la Vallière was brought up in the Palais Royal, and appointed maid of honour to Madame Henrietta, Duchess of Orleans, in 1661.

Her function in that office frequently brought her into the society of the king. Simple and lively, she conceived an attachment the consequences of which she did not calculate, as she beheld in him a handsome and interesting young man whom in his exalted position she might freely admire. Her manners were modest and even timid; she spoke little, but read much. Her face is so well known, that a description of it is almost unnecessary; it has been described as that of the Christian Venus

of France. Her eyes, blue as the virgin martyr's, and fringed with light silken lids, were seldom seen; her smile was gracious and closed; although her mouth was large, those who loved her admired it—but her rivals, and Bussy, the echo of all jealousy, attribute it to the irregularity of her teeth; her form was slight, but elegant and flexible; and her countenance expressed all that was amiable, notwithstanding her natural reserve: but she was marked with the small-pox. The defect in her gait was scarcely perceptible; a modern author, in remarking this imperfection, likens her to "a beautiful swan wounded." Madame de Sevigné calls Mademoiselle de la Vallière "*l'humble violette, si touchante, si intéressante, si tendre, et si honteuse de l'être.*"

It is so rare for a prince to be loved truly, and for himself alone, that Louis, who was sensible of her sincere attachment, grew exceedingly fond of her, and made known his passion to her at the château of Saint Germain in 1661. For some time Louisa remonstrated with him, and struggled with her own heart. She refused at first to receive him, and, in order to visit her, he was obliged to climb to the roof of the house clandestinely, and enter the window of Mademoiselle d'Artigny's apartment,

which adjoined hers; but the lady who superintended the charge of the maids of honour discovered this stratagem, and had bars placed at the windows of all their apartments.

It was at this period that Fouquet, the superintendent of finances, presuming to become the rival of his royal master, made professions to Mademoiselle de la Vallière, and offered to settle two hundred thousand livres on her, which she refused with disdain. Louis was made acquainted with his pretensions at a fête which the superintendent gave to him at his château at Vaux, and which was so "*outrageusement superbe*," that the king could not dissemble his surprise and discontent at the immoderate luxury which was displayed. Historical memoirs afford a description of the dress Mademoiselle de la Vallière wore on that day. Her robe of white tissue was embroidered with gold stars and leaves, the boddice pointed and laced with fine golden cord; her ceinture was of palest blue, fastened in front with a large knot. Her fair hair, which waved in loose curls upon her delicate shoulders, was intermixed with pearls and flowers without confusion; two large emeralds glittered at her ears; her fragile arms were bare, and encircled below the elbow with bracelets of

golden fret-work; and her gloves, of white Brussels lace, were of such delicate fabric, that her hands wore the colour of the blush-rose beneath their transparency.

It is said that, on being informed of Fouquet's admiration for Mademoiselle de la Vallière, and also on seeing a portrait of that lady in his sleeping-apartment at Vaux, the king became so exasperated that he would have arrested the superintendent in his own palace, in the midst of his magnificent entertainment, if the queen-mother had not dissuaded him. His scandalous luxury, extravagance, and waste of the money belonging to the revenue, was the pretext for his disgrace, but there is little doubt that his presumption with regard to the royal favourite was the principal cause.

Knowing that Maria Theresa especially favoured all those who understood the Spanish language, Louisa de la Vallière diligently studied it, and was admitted into her circle before she had been Queen of France twelve months. These occasions of meeting her royal lover rendered her situation more difficult, and hastened her defeat. Some jealous persons, amongst whom was the Countess of Soissons, informed the good queen of her husband's attachment, and Maria Theresa com-

plained to the king, who imposed silence on her. Obliged patiently to submit to her griefs, the unhappy queen opened her heart to her beloved friend Anne of Austria, who never ceased to reproach her son for his neglect of his amiable young wife. She also granted her request, which arose from legitimate sorrow, to refuse any future intimacy with Mademoiselle de la Vallière.

The king, who was wearied with this surveillance, took great pleasure in conducting his beloved mistress, far from etiquette and jealousy, to Versailles, which was then an inelegant little château in the middle of a wood, with nothing in the neighbourhood but a small tavern and a mill. He afterwards ornamented and magnificently furnished her a residence (the Hôtel Biron at Paris), and in 1662 gave most brilliant carousals in her honour in the place which still bears that name. His crown was ornamented with a half-blown rose, the emblem of his modest favourite, and his device was, "*Quanto si mostra men, tanto è più bella.*"

Unaspiring in the midst of all her grandeur, which sometimes seemed to overpower her, she interfered in no state affairs, and was a stranger to political intrigue. She concealed the result of her criminality with the most scrupulous care, so that

the court was almost ignorant of the birth of Marie-Anne de Bourbon (Mademoiselle de Blois) and the Count de Vermandois. Mademoiselle de la Vallière had also two other children, who died young.

Notwithstanding all the king's tenderness for her, she was not happy; she loved him devotedly, but she wept for her fault; moreover, she was sincerely grieved at the thought of the queen's domestic sorrows, for which she blamed herself, and she hesitated between her love and her duty; at length, after a painful struggle with her heart, she retired to the convent of the Benedictines of Saint Cloud.

At the time Louis was informed of her flight he was engaged with a council of his ministers; he however quitted them abruptly, and, after having assisted in saddling a horse, repaired to Saint Cloud with the rapidity of lightning, penetrated into the sacred asylum, and, in opposition to the tears and resistance of his mistress, carried her away from amongst the stupified nuns. He was ready, according to the Duke of Saint Simon, to set fire to the convent if they had refused to give him admittance.

This affair gave Mademoiselle de la Vallière the character of a declared mistress, although she

never made use of her influence as such. But the monarch, having heard that she had a brother who was an officer in one of his regiments of infantry, loaded him with favours. This young man was father to the first Duke de la Vallière.

In 1666 Mademoiselle de la Vallière was dangerously ill when giving birth to Marie-Anne de Bourbon, Mademoiselle de Blois, at Vincennes, which caused the king so much anxiety, that he was seriously indisposed in consequence; on his recovery he bestowed on her the title of Duchess, desired that she should be called *Madame*, and presented her with the territories of Vanjour. The letters patent which confer these favours contain the following preamble: "Louis, par la grâce de Dieu, Roi de France et de Navarre ..... &c.: les bienfaits que les rois exercent dans leurs états étant la marque extérieure du mérite de ceux qui les reçoivent, et le plus glorieux éloge des sujets qui en sont honorés, nous avons cru ne pouvoir mieux exprimer dans le public l'estime toute particulière que nous faisons de la personne de nôtre très-chère, bien-aimée, et très-féale, Louise-Françoise de la Vallière, qu'en lui conférant les plus hauts titres d'honneur qu'une affection très-singulière, excitée dans notre cœur

par une infinité de rares perfections, nous a inspirés depuis quelques années en sa faveur; et quoique sa modestie se soit souvent opposée au désir que nous avions de l'élever plus tôt dans un rang proportionné à notre estime et à ses bonnes qualités, néanmoins, l'affection que nous avons pour elle et la justice ne nous permettent plus de déférer les témoignages de notre reconnaissance . . . . . à ces causes . . . :" &c.

By the same letters Mademoiselle de Blois was pronounced legitimate, and this distinction was also accorded to Mademoiselle de la Vallière's second child, Louis de Bourbon, Count of Vermandois. She accepted the rank and title of duchess, solely in obedience to her lover, and out of tenderness for her children, who were educated under her own superintendence.

The birth of two other children, who died in their infancy, made cruel ravages on her personal appearance; the carnation disappeared from her cheeks, she grew excessively thin, and became but the shadow of her former self. The king perceived the change, which some, who were ambitious of supplanting her, did not fail to comment upon in his presence; but habit, and a delicate sentiment of affection and esteem which

he always retained for her, sustained his love for some time. While she still believed herself the object of tenderness to her lover, a rival was secretly robbing her of his heart, the sole good that she estimated. This rival was Françoise Athenais de Rochechourant de Mortemar, daughter of the duke of that name, and governor of Paris; she was born in 1641, and the descendant of a family equally celebrated for their noble and ancient rank as for their wit and intellectual acquirements, which were so remarkable, that "*l'esprit d'un Mortemar*" was a common expression at court. The accuracy of her ideas, her ingenuity at repartee, and the eloquent facility with which she conversed, rendered her a most agreeable companion.

In 1663 she was married to Henri-Louis de Pardaillon de Goudrin, Marquis of Montespan, and appeared at court in all the attraction of youth and beauty, joined to great love of coquetry. Her features were regular, her form and deportment majestic, her manners elegant, and these charms were heightened by an intellectual and brilliant flow of wit, that Louis could not fail to be dazzled with. She was also so skilful as to give the queen a high opinion of her virtue, by a strict attendance to her religious duties, so that she

easily blinded that good but too credulous princess. Moreover, she had the art to insinuate herself into the good graces of the Duchess de la Vallière, who, incapable of deceit or intrigue, was also unsuspicious of it, and who, thinking that her agreeable conversation gratified the king, took pleasure in inviting her to her suppers, and even in adorning her herself in every way that could render her more attractive.

By her constant association with the duchess, the ambitious marchioness became acquainted with the king's character, inclinations, and tastes, and profited by this advantage with profound art. The blindness of Louis XIV.'s mistresses is somewhat remarkable, each having introduced the one who supplanted her. The Duchess de la Vallière soon perceived that the friend she had so unsuspectingly brought into the society of her royal lover had become her rival, and that Louis could not repress his admiration of her. To gratify him, as the last effort of an ill-recompensed constancy, she redoubled her attentions to Madame de Montespan, and learned too late the king's predilection for her; from that moment the Duchess de la Vallière resolved on the sacrifice of her liberty. In vain Louis's favourites and friends the Duke de Lauzan

and the Duke de Longueville, taking advantage of the king's neglect of her, made her offers of marriage; she rejected both, for she still loved the king with that sincere and ardent affection which she so soon after vowed to Heaven; moreover, Louis would not in all probability have permitted her to marry, for the Duke of Saint Simon suspects him of entertaining this selfish and proud idea: "Qu'après avoir été à lui, il ne devait souffrir qu'elle fût être à personne qu'à Dieu;" and, says the same author, although he hesitated to pronounce the sacrifice, he saw the victim relinquish all and devote herself to a living tomb with satisfaction and even pleasure.

The following lines are attributed to the Duchess de la Vallière by the Duke de Saint Simon:—

"Tout se détruit, tout passe, et le cœur le plus tendre
Ne peut d'un même objet se contenter toujours;
Le passé n'a point vu d'éternelles amours,
Et les siècles futurs n'en doivent point attendre.
La constance a des lois qu'on ne veut point entendre;
Des desseins d'un grand roi rien n'arrête le cours:
Ce qui plait aujourd'hui déplait en peu de jours;
Son inégalité ne saurait se comprendre.
Tous ces défauts, grand roi, font tort à vos vertus;
Vous m'aimiez autrefois, et vous ne m'aimez plus.
Ah! que mes sentiments sont différens des vôtres!
Amour, à qui je dois mon mal et mon bien,
Que ne lui donnez vous un cœur comme le mien;
Ou que n'avez vous fait le mien comme les autres?"

After shedding many tears, the neglected favourite resolved to retire to the convent of Saint Marie de Chaillot. The king, who still entertained the greatest esteem and friendship for her, sent Colbert and Lauzan to bring her back to court, supposing that the former might have some influence over her, as he had the charge of her children, and the latter, because he was singularly gifted with the talent of persuasion. After some remonstrances they succeeded in persuading her to return; but she remarked, with some bitterness, that on a former occasion the king went to fetch her himself.

The duchess felt the weight of her chains, although she could not hate them; but she was miserable at court, not only on account of her lover's infidelity, but also because Madame de Montespan overwhelmed her with every species of insolence, and is even said to have disposed the apartments of the château in such a manner that the king, in going to visit her, was obliged to pass through those of Madame de la Vallière. The love she could not uproot from her heart enabled her to support these griefs with patience; but the avowal of her dissatisfaction sometimes escaped her: "Quand j'aurai de la peine aux Carmelites," she

one day remarked to a friend, "je me souviendrai de ce que ces gens m'ont fait souffrir."

Nothing could shake the resolution she had formed to retire to a cloister, to which she was encouraged by the counsels of the virtuous Duke of Beauvillière; and in a moment of generosity the king gave his permission, proposing to her to choose an order of which she could be the Abbess, and enjoy all her dignities; but she modestly replied, that, having erred in her own conduct, she could not think of directing that of others.

Before quitting the court, Madame de la Vallière was desirous of obtaining pardon from the only person she had ever injured; bathed in tears of sincerest repentance, she threw herself at the feet of the virtuous sovereign Maria Theresa, who, generously forgetting the past, raised her modest rival, embraced her, and made vows for the repose of her remaining days.

On the 19th of April, 1674, she took leave of all the court at Madame de Montespan's, where she supped with the king; the day following she attended mass with him in the queen's apartments, after which she repaired to the convent of the Carmelites in the Rue Saint Jacques, Faubourg Saint Germain.

In the following year, on her thirty-first birthday, she took the vows under the name of sister Louise de la Miséricorde, in presence of the queen and all the court, upon which occasion Maria Theresa placed the veil upon the head of the new nun. She lived in the strictest exercises of religious devotion, gave all that she possessed to the poor, and frequently subjected herself to most painful and rigorous penances. She wore iron bracelets and waistbands, and on more than one occasion fell down in the chapel faint and stiff, with cold, and long watching, and praying. Notwithstanding all these austerities, she lived thirty-six years in this seclusion, and died in the arms of her daughter, the Princess of Conti, in the year 1710, at the age of sixty-five.

The Duchess de la Vallière left one daughter, Marie-Anne de Bourbon, Mademoiselle de Blois, who was married to the Prince de Conti; and Louis de Bourbon, Count de Vermandois. After his mother's retirement, this young man's education was left to the charge of persons who were incapable of directing it, and he imbibed haughty and licentious habits, so that the king banished him his presence; he however pardoned and received him again, but the young count met an

early death, having been carried off by an ague in 1683, at the camp of Courtrai, during the siege. The king charged Bossuet, who delivered the discourse on the occasion of the duchess's profession, to prepare her for the death of her son. "Alas! my God," said the penitent, prostrating herself before her crucifix, "must I weep for his death, before I have sufficiently bewailed his birth!"

After the retreat of the Duchess de la Vallière, Louis XIV. gave way to his passion for Madame de Montespan, who felt herself unequal to contend against the seductions that surrounded her, and accordingly wrote to her husband to inform him of the king's sentiments for her, and entreated him to remove her from the court to his château at Guyenne; he however did not heed her request, not because he was indifferent to her, but, on the contrary, because he was exceedingly attached, and for that reason was deaf to the energetic warnings of his wife, whom he imagined to be above all temptation.

A short time after, Louis gave a magnificent carousal in her honour, when the Marquis de Montespan, discovering his error, proceeded to court, where he loaded the marchioness with invectives, presented himself to the king in deep mourning, which was contrary to etiquette, and made so much

disturbance respecting his conjugal disgrace, that he was first sent to the Bastille, and afterwards banished to Guyenne.

Madame de Montespan, who was publicly acknowledged as the king's mistress, lived in a style of extravagant pomp and magnificence, gave superb fêtes, eclipsed the queen by her luxury, and contracted enormous debts; in one night only she lost, in partnership with the king, four hundred thousand pistoles, and, determining to play until she had recovered it, continued to gamble until sunrise. Her grandeur contrasted strangely with the simplicity of her predecessor, and she declared that she would restore the brilliancy and privileges which appertained to the royal favourite, and which Madame de la Vallière had suffered to fall into oblivion. She received the ministers, and always appeared in public with the pomp and suit of a sovereign. At the carousals which the monarch gave in her honour, he wore her favourite colours, and on his crown a star composed of large diamonds surrounded by a multitude of smaller ones, with this device—"*à la plus belle;*" and in order to give her the honours which belong exclusively to privileged ladies, he named her, in 1667, superintendent of the queen's household. Maria

Theresa, on being informed of this, exclaimed. "Cette *femme* me fera mourir." The favourite was not less dreaded by the ministers and generals, and the courtiers even avoided passing under her windows, declaring that they would not "*passer par les armes.*"

Madame de Montespan gave birth to the Duke de Maine at the Château of Saint Germain in 1670, and had several other children. She confided them to the care of Madame Scarron, a woman in every respect worthy of the choice; Madame de Montespan provided her with a house in the Faubourg Saint-Germain, where she brought them up with all the tenderness and affection of a mother, and it was supposed by the inhabitants in the Faubourg that they were her own.

Her choice of such a governess proves the good judgment of Madame de Montespan, who constantly obtained favours and presents for her from the king with courageous perseverance; for, although Louis appreciated Madame Scarron's merits, he could with difficulty support her presence, having conceived an unconquerable dislike to her.

Nevertheless she experienced many vexations on account of Madame Scarron, and eventually had cause to reproach herself for not having dismissed

her when the king urged her to do so; but, devoted to the interest of her children, the marchioness continued her regard for her, although she despised her haughty manners, and had frequently angry discussions with her; but the mother's love triumphed over the woman's griefs, and the governess was always loaded with kindness.

Madame de Montespan's prodigality deserves severe censure; not content with a pension of a thousand louis a month, she contracted immense debts, which Louis was obliged to pay. Her superstitious devotion is also equally blamable; she imagined that her irregularities could be atoned for by expiatory practices, and never omitted the abstinences prescribed by the Church, but sometimes left her royal lover's society to perform penance in her oratory; and thus intermingled religious practices with worldly diversions.

Madame de Montespan judiciously abstained from interfering in government affairs or political intrigues, and the fifteen years that she was mistress of Louis XIV. were the most brilliant and happy of his reign. But, always faithful to religion, though forgetting its precepts, the monarch frequently displayed alternatives of tenderness and repentance. Sometimes they mutually agreed to

lead a more regular life, and would separate for a short space of time, after which remorse would be succeeded by fresh indulgences, and the scandal would recommence, so that the shame of so many relapses obliged her to conceal the birth of her two last children from public knowledge, in order to avoid displeasing their father.

The queen was for some time ignorant of the existence of Louis's children by Madame de Montespan, but, having one day met two of them at Versailles, she caressed them with tears, saying, "Madame de Richelieu me tranquillisait toujours sur ce qui se passait: voilà la réalité."

At length Louis XIV., tired or discontented with Madame de Montespan, renewed his attentions to his virtuous wife, but it was only a dream of happiness for Marie Thérèse; for Madame de Montespan, perceiving the king's coldness, thought she would recover his affection by introducing to him a woman whom the Abbé Choisi represents as a "femme sans conséquence, belle comme l'amour, mais sotte comme un panier." This was Marie Angélique de Scoraille de Roussille, of an ancient family of Rouergue, where she was born in 1661. The Duchess of Arpajou, who was astonished at the extreme beauty of this young lady, obtained her a

situation as maid of honour to Madame Henriette Although the court was remarkable for the beauties of which it was at that time composed, Mademoiselle de Roussille, who was then only sixteen years of age, outshone them all; she was called the *brilliant Fontanges;* but her physical advantages were all she possessed; mind and intelligence were wanting.

Louis, who had often heard Madame de Montespan speak of "*la belle idole de marbre de province,*" was at length curious to see her, and the favourite presented the young maid of honour in the becoming dress of the chace; he was enraptured with her, and this rising star soon eclipsed all others. Mademoiselle de Roussille on her part was easily won. Educated in a provincial château, and taught from her cradle that she was beautiful enough to be loved by a king, she believed that her destiny was accomplished. Young and thoughtless, she responded to the king's passion with affection, and even in the queen's presence. She rendered herself remarkable by the splendour of her jewellery, as also by the extraordinary style of her head-dress, which has preserved the name of *Fontanges,* the only memorial she has left posterity of her ephemeral reign. She broke through all rules of etiquette without shame, and also without

discernment or discretion; frequently entered Maria Theresa's apartment, and addressed the king, without first speaking to the queen; and this freedom, improper as it was, pleased Louis, who was tired of court constraint.

On her eighteenth birthday he presented her with a superb house, and dignified her with the title of Duchess of Fontanges. This favour, the enormous sum she received (three hundred thousand livres a month), the rich presents Louis made her in jewels and equipages, and the nomination of her sister to the Abbey of Chelles, added to her own pride, created her numberless enemies at court. They were scandalised by her prodigality; her carriages were always drawn by eight horses; and it may truly be said that she hastened to accomplish her short destiny.

Madame de Montespan, who was furious at the result of her own imprudence in introducing her to the king, abandoned herself to the most violent transports of jealousy. But she had an enemy far more formidable in the person of Madame Scarron, to whom the king had given the name and lands of Maintenon, and who was secretly and incessantly working upon his mind by her superstitious insinuations; so that her apparent wisdom

made a greater impression upon him than the brilliant wit of Madame de Montespan, who sought a retreat to be freed from domestic quarrels.

She repaired to the Duchess de la Vallière at the convent of the Carmelites, and through her example subjected herself to various austerities. "Is it true," she one day inquired of the duchess, "that you are as happy as you appear to be?" "I am not happy," replied the pious Carmelite; "but I am quite contented:" a reply which marked the calm of a good conscience, even under the weight of affliction. In this retreat she one day saw the queen, who was in the habit of visiting the duchess, upon which she threw herself at her feet and entreated her pardon. The kind and indulgent sovereign generously accorded it, but she had also the weakness to invite her to return to court, and reinstated her in her function of superintendent of her household. Madame de Montespan accepted the offer, doubtless with the firm resolution of living in an exemplary manner. Accordingly she reappeared at court, and for a short time maintained her resolution.

In the mean time the Duchess of Fontanges triumphed; she was the superb Amazon of the chace, the fairy of the gardens at Versailles, and

the brilliant sultana at court: but her triumph was short. Madame de Maintenon, who by her studied appearance had obtained some influence at court, endeavoured to convert her as well as Louis, but her power of persuasion failed, for the young favourite, who was wearied with so much useless eloquence, did not deign to reply to her aged counsellor, but turned her back and commenced singing. More serious warnings were, however, reserved for her, for in 1680 she gave birth to a son, who died on coming into the world, and the effects of her accouchement, which had been most dangerous, robbed her of the rare beauty she so dearly prized.

The Duchess of Fontanges felt that in losing her personal attractions she had lost all, and Louis XIV. did not fail to make her conscious of this sad truth. She accordingly asked and obtained permission to retire to the convent of Port Royal, where the king ordered the Duke de Feuillade to visit her frequently. From the time of the birth of her child she gradually declined; her last moments were spent in tears of remorse for the past, and when about to die she sent to entreat the king to come and bid her a last adieu. He at first refused, dreading the commiseration it would cause him; but, fearing to wound her, at length yielded to her request.

On seeing her, Louis could not restrain his tears; he found the woman who was lately so lovely and seducing, a pale skeleton, with sunken eyes, and a countenance scarcely recognisable; she gazed on him with a species of avidity, tenderly bade him farewell, and begged of him to marry her sister, that she might avoid meeting with a similar fate to her own. The king promised to grant her request, at which the dying girl's countenance coloured with the last rays of joy. She warmly thanked him for visiting her, and said that such a mark of tenderness had softened her last moments; then, pressing his hand, she expired at the age of twenty, in the year 1681. It has been said that before her death she declared that she had been poisoned by Madame de Montespan, but there is no foundation for the assertion. She was buried at Port Royal, and her heart was deposited in the abbey of Chelles.

Madame de Montespan, who reappeared at court still beautiful and weak, was induced by Louis, who became once more enamoured of her, to resume her former mode of life, and forget her wise resolutions. But new quarrels caused by Madame de Maintenon, who secretly triumphed, again divided the lovers, and, after the death of the Duchess de Fontanges, Madame de Montespan openly exhibited such in-

decent joy, that the king expressed his discontent at her insensibility. Madame de Maintenon's reserved manners appeared to him more estimable than her impetuosity, and the beautiful, the ironical, the intellectual, and superb Marchioness de Montespan felt too late that she must quit the Tuileries, Versailles, Marley, and the brilliant fêtes and carousals; she must bid adieu to grandeur and power in all its forms, and experience all that was terrible in the triumph of her enemies, all that was bitter in the indifference of her friends.

In 1682 her son the Duke of Maine was employed to convey her the order for her dismissal from court, a circumstance which does not display much delicacy on the part of Louis XIV., and which Madame de Montespan felt keenly. Driven from the court, from the king's heart, and perhaps from his memory, Madame de Montespan went where all the disgraced and faded mistresses went, to a convent, which she had built, and where she retired with a withering sorrow at her heart. For many years she vainly invoked the balm of religion, but disappointment rankled in her mind; she could not forget or endure to forego her late brilliant position.

She visited several monasteries in France, but, not being enabled to accustom herself to a conventual

life, resided for some time at her château of Petit-Bourg, where she wandered like a desolate shadow beneath the venerable tress in her park, or on the banks of the Seine, murmuring her regrets at the infidelity of her royal lover.

Generous in the midst of her misery, she at length sought diversion in acts of charity; for, although in the year 1676 the Marquis de Montespan had procured a divorce, she had a large fortune of her own, independently of which the king gave her an annual pension of eight thousand louis, and in 1700 presented her with one hundred thousand francs to purchase the domains of Oiron for her legitimate son the Duke d'Antin; so that she had ample means of satisfying her benevolent inclinations. But, weary and restless, she determined on settling permanently, and accordingly retired to the convent of Saint Joseph, where the excellent and pious La Tour became the director of her conscience.

The king obtained her promise never to return to court, or to seek to revenge herself upon the woman who had made her descend from the throne; he made her write to her husband, to ask his forgiveness and permission to return to him, entreating him with the greatest humility and contrition to receive her; but Monsieur de Montespan desired her

never more to address him, and would never hear her name mentioned. She employed all she possessed in solacing and relieving the poor, for whom she made clothes of coarse materials, and was constantly engaged in some employment of a charitable nature, leaving it only to attend her devotions, or to sustain herself with an austerely frugal meal. She changed her costly robes for those of the coarsest stuff, and subjected herself to severe privations, always wearing a ceinture lined with iron points which pierced her at each movement. She even subdued her tongue, or rather her spirit, that flexible, vivacious, and ironical dart, which she had launched against so many reputations at court, killing many and wounding more; so that the sarcastic scornful empress became the simple and indulgent woman, void of either wit or malice.

One species of pride, however, she never relinquished, notwithstanding her austerities; she would not renounce the ceremonies in practice at court. There was but one fauteuil in her room, and that she occupied; when the princes her sons, her daughter the Duchess of Orleans, or any of the blood royal visited her, she received them without rising, and they were seated on chairs. Many of the court visited her, but she never returned any visits.

Notwithstanding her mortifications and change of life and habits, Madame de Montespan remained beautiful until her last hour, but her health gradually declined. Two months of each year she spent at Bourbon-Archambault for the benefit of the waters, and it was in that town that she was attacked with the malady which deprived her of existence in a few hours: her immediate death was caused by the extreme ignorance of her medical attendants, who injudiciously administered emetics to her; a remedy which was much in vogue in the seventeenth century. She availed herself of some moments of ease to make a public confession of her errors, and declare her sorrow for the bad example she had given and the scandal she had occasioned; and in this humble and repentant disposition she breathed her last, in the year 1707, at the age of sixty-six.

Her legitimate son the Duke d'Antin went to Bourbon-Archambault, and, after looking coldly on her, ordered her to be embalmed; but she was left so long unburied, that the public dignitaries at length caused the body to be transported to Poitiers, and deposited in her own family-vault. She left directions for her heart to be conveyed to the convent of Saint Joseph, but there was so much delay, owing

to the negligence of the embalmers, that her wishes could not be complied with. Saint Edmé asserts that the père guardien of the convent of the Capucins de Bourbon threw it away.

Louis XIV. displayed no emotion on being informed of the death of the once-adored Marchioness de Montespan. She had seven children by him: Louis-Auguste de Bourbon, Duke de Maine, who was declared by his father capable of succeeding to the throne; Cesar-Louis, Count de Vixin, abbé of Saint-Denis and Saint-Germain; Louise-Françoise, Mademoiselle de Nantes, who married Louis III., Duke of Bourbon, grandson of the great Condé; Louise-Marie-Antoinette, Mademoiselle de Tours; Françoise-Marie, Mademoiselle de Blois, who married the Duke of Orleans, regent of France; Louis-Alexandre, Count of Toulouse; and one other son, who died young: all of whom were pronounced legitimate in 1673. Madame de Montespan had one son only by her husband; he was the Duke d'Antin.

After the dismissal of Madame de Montespan, Maria Theresa was once more solaced with the affection of her husband, through the persuasions of Madame de Maintenon; and the broken-hearted queen openly testified her satisfaction and friendship

for that artful woman. Her domestic griefs had, however, made severe inroads upon her constitution; and this model of virtue and patience expired in 1683, at the Château de Chombord, aged forty-five years. In her last moments the king approached her bed and addressed her in Spanish; his consoling language appeared to reanimate her for a moment, and her appearance testified that she died more content.

After her death Louis XIV. declared publicly that the queen had never caused him any grief but by her death; he sincerely lamented the virtuous wife whose premature loss he had occasioned; and so great was his veneration for her memory, that on the anniversary of her death he never partook of any recreation, but confined himself the whole day to his apartment. Nevertheless, this monarch, who so cruelly neglected that truly royal and amiable princess, who was the ornament of her sex, reserved all his love and tenderness for an intriguing parvenue, whom he afterwards made his lawful wife.

Maria Theresa had three sons and as many daughters—the dauphin Louis, and two sons who were successively Dukes of Anjou; her daughters all died young: the grief which destroyed her health

extended its influence over the physical strength of her children, not one of whom lived to succeed his father. She was buried in the royal tomb of Saint-Denis.

MADAME DE MAINTENON.

FRANCES D'AUBIGNÉ was the only daughter of Constant d'Aubigné, and Jane de Cardillac, who was descended from a noble family in Guyenne; she was born in the year 1635, in the prison of Niort, where her father, who was greatly addicted to extravagance, was detained for debt. His wife having chosen to accompany him there, her sister Madame de Vilette conveyed the newly-born infant from the prison to the Château de Murcay, and had her nursed with her own daughter.

In 1639 her father was removed from Niort to the Château Trompette at Bordeaux, and obtained his liberty upon condition that he would renounce the Protestant religion, which all his family professed, and embrace the Catholic faith; but to elude his promise he determined to proceed to Martinique, and embarked for that island with his wife and

daughter. Their voyage was attended with accidents, for on one occasion the vessel narrowly escaped being captured by an Algerine corsair; and the little Frances was attacked with so serious an illness, that all signs of life disappeared, and preparations were made for placing her in the sepulchre which usually awaits those who die at sea, when her mother, who could not abandon hope, discovered some sign of life in the inanimate form of her child, and by unceasing efforts she was recovered from an obstinate and profound lethargy.

Her father entered into a mercantile house, and by great exertions amassed a considerable sum of money, so that Mademoiselle d'Aubigné received in that colony a brilliant education, which was afterwards the source of all her prosperity. But fortune was as fickle in her treatment of Monsieur d'Aubigné in Martinique as she had been to him in his native land; in 1643 he sent his daughter back to France, and died in extreme indigence in 1646.

Mademoiselle d'Aubigné was warmly welcomed by her generous benefactress Madame de Vilette, with whom she might have lived happily; but by the order of the ecclesiastical court she was removed from the care of this Protestant friend, and confided to that of another relation, Madame de

Neuillant, a zealous Catholic of Poitou, who employed every effort to convert her young charge. Her endeavours were, however, vain; and Mademoiselle d'Aubigné, who persisted in her religious principles, was condemned by Madame de Neuillant to overlook and assist in the lowest work of the servants and to take charge of the farm-yard.

A young peasant, who, like herself, was employed to guard the sheep and cows while grazing, and who by daily meeting her had become a familiar acquaintance, fell in love with her, and Madame de Neuillant, who discovered his inclination, immediately sent her to the convent of the Ursulines de Niort. She was, however, expelled shortly after, the nuns refusing to retain so rebellious a pupil, who endeavoured to convert the whole monastery to Protestantism, as well as the priest who was engaged to instruct her; and incessantly opposed his doctrine by arguments drawn from scriptural texts.

Madame de Neuillant therefore conducted Mademoiselle d'Aubigné to Paris in 1648, and obliged her to travel on the mule which conveyed her bedding. In Paris she was sent to an Ursuline convent, and while there she had the misfortune to lose all she held dear on earth,—her mother and her aunt. Finding herself without friends, or any support in

the world, and wearied with continual solicitations, she at length abjured the religion of her fathers, and embraced the Catholic faith in the convent of the Ursulines de Paris, in the year 1649.

From that time Madame de Neuillant treated her more kindly, and introduced her to society, in which she shone by her intellectual talent; but her guardian was too avaricious to pay any attention to her personal appearance or dress, and this negligence often caused her to shed tears of mortification. Notwithstanding this disadvantage, Mademoiselle d'Aubigné was an object of admiration to the Chevalier de Meri, the Marquis de Villarceaux (Ninon de l'Enclos' lover), and Paul Scarron, the wit of the day. The latter, indignant at the unjust treatment she received from Madame de Neuillant, offered to release her from her odious care, either by paying her expenses at the convent or by marrying her.

Mademoiselle d'Aubigné was then only sixteen years of age, and Scarron, so celebrated for his burlesque writings, was aged, deformed, overwhelmed with infirmities, gouty, and nailed to his elbow-chair, but always cheerful and gay, notwithstanding his sufferings. She was tired of the cloister and accepted him for her husband with gratitude

but his poverty was such, that Mademoiselle de Pons lent her a dress for appearing in at the ceremony of her marriage.

Scarron occupied two small chambers in the Rue de la Tissanderie; all the fortune he possessed consisted in the produce of his works, and an annual pension of fifteen hundred francs, in quality of a *malade de la Reine-mère.* But the poet's narrow fortune did not prevent the most clever and intellectual persons at court from frequenting his modest apartments, whither they were attracted by his sparkling wit and enlivening conversation.

In this brilliant society the young wife, who was called *la belle Indienne,* formed an acquaintance with the bewitching Ninon l'Enclos, who was so celebrated for her beauty, grace, wit, and elegant manners. They were in the habit of assembling to sup at Scarron's, where their evenings were divided between gay songs, bon-mots, and the charms of agreeable conversation, in which Madame Scarron possessed eloquent facility. It is said that on one occasion, when thus engaged in an interesting discourse, the servant went near her and whispered to her, "Madame, encore une histoire; le rôt manque aujourd'hui."

Madame Scarron's solicitude for her aged and

infirm husband gained her as much esteem as her beauty obtained her admirers. She rarely quitted *le pauvre paralytique*, as she was in the habit of calling him. When he was ill, she was his nurse and servant; when re-established, his companion, secretary, and reader. When not engaged in receiving company, she occupied herself in the compilation of her husband's works, and studied Spanish, Italian, and Latin, all of which she was well versed in.

In the year 1660, after a union of ten years, she became a widow, and sincerely lamented her protector, who left her at the age of twenty-six in a state of extreme indigence, with nothing but the recollection of his talents and his debts, and in the possession of great beauty.

She was of middle height and an elegant figure, with clear chestnut-coloured hair and brilliant black eyes: these charms were heightened by reserved and modest manners. Such were her moral as well as personal advantages, that Queen Christina of Sweden, who disliked her own sex generally, felicitated Scarron on the possession of such a wife.

Her beauty and indigence caused her many temptations. Fouguet, the superintendent of finances, sent her a superb casket containing money

and very valuable jewels; but the beautiful widow indignantly repulsed the emissary and the present; the Marquis de Crequi met with the same reception: and the queen-mother, appreciating her disinterestedness, restored her her late husband's pension.

She was in this position when Ninon l'Enclos offered her her house and table, but Madame Scarron afterwards proved herself ungrateful by forgetting her friendship, as she did the goodness of Louis XIV. in later years. It is said also that Madame Scarron owed a part of the means which enabled her to appear in society, and the reparation of her fortune, to the favours she accorded to the Duke of Villars, and Marshal Harcourt's father, who introduced her to the Hôtel Richelieu, where she was received as *lady's companion*. Amongst other duties, her business was to see that the fires were replenished, the dinner-tables properly arranged and served, and to order the carriages: these fastidious charges were a short time afterwards dispensed with by the introduction of bells.

She has been accused of having encouraged the attentions of Ninon's lover, the Marquis of Villaceaux, notwithstanding the proofs of friendship which she obtained from her; and in one of her letters Ninon remarks, "Leur avoir prêté sa chambre jaune."

For some time Madame Scarron chose a retreat in the Hospitaliers of the Place Royal, where she lived content with little; but, in 1666, the death of Anne of Austria replunged her into absolute indigence, and a contemporary author affirms that her name was inscribed on the charitable list in the parish of Saint Eustache. The Marshal d'Albret then offered her his hôtel, and the widow accepted that asylum, but formed a resolution never to receive that gentleman's visits but in his wife's presence. The Duke de Saint Simon asserts that Monsieur de Villarceaux, for whom she had a decided preference, maintained her for some time during her distress, and lived with her on a small estate near Paris. Her beauty and talent was the subject of so much remark that Madame de Montespan procured a new pension for Madame Scarron, whom she remembered having seen in society, and whose merit she duly appreciated. This act of kindness enabled her to become the tenant of a convent, where she retired with a waiting-maid named Nanon Balbieu, who some time after governed France, because she governed her mistress, who governed the king. This old servant lived to see the ministers of the country bow to her antiquated caps, and received the kisses of the king's daughters

upon her cheeks. Had it not been for the assistance she received from the royal bounty through Madame de Montespan's interference, Madame Scarron would have accompanied the suite of Mademoiselle de Nemours to Portugal, whither she went to be united to Alphonso VI.

On this occasion, when requesting an audience with the Marchioness de Montespan, she artfully remarked to Madame de Thianges, that before leaving the country she hoped at least to see the *wonder of all France*, which flattery was, as she wished, conveyed to her. That lady had the greater merit for the benefits and favours she procured for the widow Scarron, because when soliciting them the king always listened to her unwillingly.

"Am I continually to hear that woman spoken of?" he one day said impatiently.

"Yes, sire," replied the favourite with courage; "I will importune you until you have snatched from misery a woman whose ancestors perished in the service of your own."

Madam Scarron's fortune may be dated from the day she obtained an interview with the Marchioness de Montespan to thank her for her goodness, for from that time the favourite resolved on placing her two children under her care. Death

soon robbed her of the eldest, and all Madame Scarron's care and attention was centered in the second, who was the Duke du Maine. Her solicitude for her young charge necessarily procured her the friendship of his mother, who took great pleasure in the widow's society, and spent much time with her, so that Louis displayed great jealousy at this preference, and entertained so great an aversion for Madame Scarron, and what he termed her *pruderie*, that he requested the Marchioness to reply to her only by monosyllables when he was present.

The friendship which existed between the favourite and the governess did not, however, last long; they had frequent quarrels respecting the mode of education; but Madame de Montespan was so conscious of Madame Scarron's merits that she overlooked and forgave much of her imperiousness, and constantly loaded her with presents; while, on her part, the governess was, or affected to be, so devoted to the king's children, that he could not help acknowledging her value, and, in order to recompense her for her anxious solicitude for the improvement of the delicate health of the Duke du Maine, in the year 1674 made her a present of one hundred thousand francs, with which she pur-

chased the estate of Maintenon, near Versailles, of which she was so fond, that the king called her Madame de Maintenon from that period; fourteen years after it became a Marquisate.

This voluntary present on the part of Louis XIV. gave great offence to Madame de Montespan, who made some sarcastic remarks on the occasion, upon which the governess, who had acted so skilfully as to impress the king with an idea that her presence was actually necessary to the welfare of his children, alarmed the favourite by threatening to resign her charge, and artfully hinted her intention of doing so to Louis XIV., who entreated her to remain with them, which she consented to do upon condition that henceforward she should render an account of their health and progress to himself only.

This was the first affront offered to Madame de Montespan. She was the mother of seven children by Louis XIV., and each year added to the cares and anxieties of their governess, who devoted herself entirely to their education, living in great retirement in the Rue Vaugirard in Paris, until the king caused them to be pronounced legitimate, and called her to court. A short time before her appearance there, having judged that a journey to some watering-place would be of service to the

health of her eldest pupil, the Duke du Maine, who was exceedingly weak and delicate, Madame de Maintenon conducted the children to Barrages. The change proved of very great benefit to her young charge, and on returning from her visit to that place she one day agreeably surprised the king by entering his cabinet with the young duke, whom she presented to him restored to health and no longer lame.

The monarch was both astonished and delighted at his son's restoration, and from that time his aversion for Madame de Maintenon changed into contrary sentiments. Her office as governess insensibly led her frequently to his cabinet and drew on long conversations; politically skilful, she discovered that Louis XIV. was inclined towards a superstitious devotion, and artfully made use of her discovery as a means by which she could walk on securely towards the realisation of her ambitious dreams.

The king frequently met her in the apartment of Madame de Montespan, and could not fail to notice the altercations which occurred between his favourite and the governess, who on one occasion requested his permission to leave the court, being as she said, profoundly afflicted and seriously un-

easy, from religious scruples, that his Majesty had forgotten the promise he had given the Abbé Bossuet to renounce Madame de Montespan. This hypocritical and ungrateful request was not made until Madame de Maintenon had worked upon the king's mind in such a manner as to feel sure that he would not suffer her to leave the court. She became not only an object of raillery to most of the courtiers, but also of just resentment to the still powerful marchioness; nevertheless she sacrificed her repose to her ambition; yet, when almost seated on the throne, she remarked in a letter to her friend Ninon de l'Enclos that she envied her peaceable independence.

In 1679 the king gave her apartments in the palace, in order that he might enjoy the charms of her conversation without constraint. Although no longer young, she was still beautiful, her eyes were brilliant and expressive, and her figure and manners elegant. From the time she became a resident at court, she ceased visiting Madame de Montespan, and actively commenced undermining her in the favour of the king, until the marchioness perceived too late that she had introduced to her royal lover the woman who would supplant her.

Madame de Maintenon first made use of her

influence towards raising her own family. Her brother, Charles d'Aubigné, an undeserving and worthless spendthrift, was loaded with wealth; his sister sold places and favours to satisfy the prodigalities of this parvenue. All France murmured, and Louvois himself complained to Louis of such abuses; but the blinded king defended the actions of his new favourite, who triumphed over her enemies, France itself, and even justice and reason.

Shortly after her installation at the palace, she persuaded the king to dismiss Madame de Montespan, and even caused her dismissal to be conveyed to her by her son the Duke du Maine. By this means she insensibly drew him closer to herself, using the two powerful arguments of religion and his duty to the unhappy and declining queen, who was the victim and witness of so many acts of weakness. Maria Theresa herself, who had been so often deceived by appearances and insulted by her rivals, perceived in Madame de Maintenon nothing more than a sincere friend who was desirous of strengthening the conjugal bond; and, grateful to her for having always respected and treated her as a wife and queen, is said when dying to have placed her royal ring upon the favourite's finger.

The Duchess de Fontanges had, according to

Malherbe's expression, lived but a morning; Madame de Montespan was exiled and forgotten, and the queen had descended into the tomb, so that Madame de Maintenon's path was now uninterrupted. To so high a degree of favour was she elevated, and such was her pride and ambition, that in 1684 she refused to accept the situation of dame d'honneur to the dauphine. There was but one place at which she aimed, or which she considered worthy of her acceptance—that of the deceased queen! Louis XIV., having no longer a wife, redoubled his attentions to his friend; he even assisted her at table, spent several days with her in retirement at Maintenon, and was in the habit of walking beside her sedan-chair with his head uncovered. The court railed and the public libelled them in vain; the King's Jesuit confessor, La Chaise, and Madame de Maintenon, overruled all obstacles, and the intriguers obtained the fruits of their audacity and perseverance.

The eighteenth century offers two examples of women who experienced prodigious elevations: Louis XIV. renounced his pride of rank and aristocratic privileges in favour of Madame de Maintenon; and Peter the Great, with noble determination, recompensed the admirable courage

of Catherine, by sharing with her the Imperial throne. But Madame de Maintenon obtained her elevation from a promise of marriage, extorted by degrees, and through bad counsels, from an enfeebled monarch; while Catherine, a poor but heroic girl, won her crown on the banks of the Pruth. Her marriage was no innovation of the customs in Russia, because it was usual for the nobles to choose their wives from among the most beautiful women in the empire, without regard to birth; whereas, since the second race of kings in France, the political interest of the nation has been always consulted in the alliance of the sovereigns, who are expected to sacrifice their affections for the honour of governing their country.

Madame de Maintenon's marriage was an obscure act: the ceremony was performed in secret; and Louis XIV. dared not avow or proclaim it; whereas it was on the day which was appointed for solemnly recompensing the brave who had assisted in obtaining the victory that Peter the Great presented his wife to the nation, proudly declaring, "Catherine Alexiewna has saved the country; I, Czar of Moscow, make her Empress of Russia!" Such was never Madame de Maintenon's political position in France; on the contrary, to her interference

in state matters has been attributed the misfortunes which clouded the latter days of Louis XIV.'s reign.

The day on which the marriage of the king and Madame de Maintenon took place is uncertain, but it was in the year 1684. The nuptial benediction was pronounced at night, in a cabinet at Versailles, by Monsieur Harly, Archbishop of Paris, in the presence of the Abbé Gabelin, the Père La Chaise, the Chevalier Forbin, and the Marquises Montchevreuil and Bontems, who was the king's first valet de chambre, and served the mass on the occasion.

Although this union was not made public, it caused Madame de Maintenon to be surrounded with the homage of the court and foreign ambassadors; and if she was prohibited from assuming the title, she did not fail to affect the prerogatives, of a queen. Accordingly, when she went to visit the monastery of the Carmelites at Paris, the abbess respectfully observed that, according to the privileges of the establishment, the gates could be opened to the queen only. "Ouvrez toujours, ma mère," she replied. On another occasion, the Duchess of Burgundy having been suddenly indisposed when visiting her, she would not suffer that princess to be placed on her bed, but hastily arranged some pillows on

the sofa for her; as, by the etiquette of the court, all but the king are rigorously prohibited from reposing on the queen's bed.

With the exception of the amiable and lively Duchess of Burgundy, who always called Madame de Maintenon *ma tante*, the royal family entertained great dislike for their new relative, and could with difficulty support the idea of her marriage, while the nation considered it both ridiculous and burthensome.

During the manœuvres of the camp at Compiègne in 1696, the army beheld the children and grandchildren of France obliged to stand in the presence of this parvenue, or to sit on the poles of her sedan-chair, the glasses of which she always kept closed, to preserve her complexion from any injury which it might sustain from contact with the air. Several of the royal princes were so much mortified that they suffered expressions of discontent to escape them, for which they incurred the king's displeasure, and consequently were disgraced. Louis's sister-in-law, Henrietta of England, remarks in her Memoirs, "qu'elle consolait toujours la dauphine, quand cette *vieille* la mettait au désespoir;" and upon some slight breach of respect on the part of the Princess de Conti, the king launched so angry a look at her,

that she fainted away, and was dangerously ill afterwards.

Madame de Maintenon never visited the king's daughters, but sometimes sent for them, "pour leur laver la tête comme une bonne marâtre, et elles en sortaient toutes en pleurs." All trembled before her power. In 1669, Racine the tragedian, having without thought spoken of the benefactor and husband of her early days, Scarron, in her presence, became suddenly aware of his imprudence, and was so confused and agitated on the occasion, that he died from the consequences of his emotion. Although her marriage was strictly secret, she was nevertheless careful to make even the peasantry acquainted with it, and had the gratification of being called *your Majesty* by that class of people at Versailles and Maintenon. Madame d'Houdicourt, in speaking to her of the royal hunt one day, said, "Nos maris reviendront tard."

Louis XIV. solemnly promised his minister Louvois that he would never declare his marriage with Madame de Maintenon; nevertheless, in 1685, yielding to his wife's ambitious entreaties, he was about to proclaim her queen, when Louvois threw himself at the monarch's feet in presence of several noblemen of the court, and, presenting him his sword,

entreated him to kill him, if he intended violating his oath. The king hesitated, but Louvois embraced his knees, and refused to rise until he declared that he would keep his promise. The Archbishop of Paris also reminded him of his oath, which the king renewed to him also. It was not, however, long before these two men, who had the courage to perform their duty to their sovereign and country, were disgraced; Madame de Maintenon was disappointed, but she was also revenged.

The king always received the ministers for the discussion of state affairs, in which she participated, in her apartments; on some occasions her advice was good, but on most it was interested; and several important appointments were bestowed on her creatures or friends, whether they were capable of undertaking them or otherwise. She nominated her favourite Chamillart minister of the army and navy, and disgraced Catinat to make room for Villeroi.

In 1700 she biassed the council, and by her influence caused them to determine on accepting the will of the King of Spain, which conferred the crown on the Duke of Anjou. She also formed an intimacy with the Princess des Ursins, who was all-

powerful in the reign of Philip V., in order to obtain some influence in the administration of Spain.

The establishment of Saint Cyr is the only sumptuous work which she effected. It is said that, despairing of gaining the king's attachment, and fearing that he would never conceive a serious passion for her, she was desirous of multiplying the objects of her affection, and consequently established and educated two hundred and fifty young girls of good family, but without beauty or fortune, and on their leaving Saint Cyr the king gave them a dower.

But this act of selfish benevolence does not compensate for the evil she did by counselling the king to revoke the Edict of Nantes. Though Louis XIV. had much grandeur of soul, he possessed also a fanatical and devotional superstition, which he imbibed from Anne of Austria. Instead of exercising her influence towards modifying his religious sentiments, Madame de Maintenon was always fearful of appearing attached to her former faith, and considered it wiser to flatter the sovereign upon whose will the publication of her marriage depended.

Louvois cruelly executed the barbarous decree which was the result of her pernicious advice, and which deprived France of three millions of useful

and peaceful citizens. Soldiers were sent into all the protestant towns and villages, with permission to use every means, with impunity, for the propagation of the Catholic faith. Gentlemen were mutilated, and their houses, lands, and tenantry destroyed by fire and sword; babes were torn from the maternal breast; mothers and wives had their heads shaved, and were thrown into the cells of convents; pastors expired on the wheel; and citizens were burned in their houses. Such were the consequences of Madame de Maintenon's fatal influence over Louis XIV.

France was horrified at the consequences of their union, and the virtuous Fenelon opposed its proclamation with courageous resistance, for which he paid the price of exile in 1692. Madame de Maintenon, who knew how to awaken Louis XIV.'s superstitious terrors, even caused a blacksmith to come from the little town of Salon, in Provence, and to assure the king that he had seen the phantom of Maria Theresa in the forest three several times, and that the phantom had strictly and solemnly charged him to tell the king to acknowledge Madame de Maintenon as queen. Louis admitted this imposter, and conversed with him in private; he appeared much struck at what he communicated,

spoke of it with credulity, and, but for the strenuous zeal of Bossuet and Fenelon, her ambitious dreams of elevation would have been realised.

To please the king she undertook the conversion of all her own relatives. In speaking of one of her rebellious little cousins, she said, "Je la convertirai, aussi; il n'y a d'autres moyens que la violence." The king's doubts respecting the sincerity of her religious faith vanished before such demonstrations of zeal; her power became daily more absolute, and she profited by it to load all her family with riches. In 1698 she married her niece Mademoiselle d'Aubigné to the Count d'Ayen, afterwards Duke of Noailles, gave her from her own private purse six hundred thousand francs towards her dower, and induced the king to give her eight hundred thousand, and jewels to the amount of four thousand louis, as well as the situation of *dame du palais*. She also gave her husband the appointment of governor of Rousillon and Berri. Madame de Maintenon was, however, less interested for herself, having refused any gift from the king beyond that of the domain of Maintenon.

The enfeebled monarch was never content but in her society; he neither conversed, played, nor partook of his repasts without her, and frequently

retired with her to Marly or Fontainebleau for several successive days. Thus she robbed France of his paternal solicitude, to engage him in frivolous superstitions and theological contentions, or private and insignificant details, which were quite unworthy the attention of the ruler of a great empire. She even infected him with her affection for Saint Cyr, for he interested himself in that establishment as if it were of the highest importance, while France was placed upon the edge of a precipice by the inexperience of her creature, Chamillart.

His court, once so brilliant, became cold and rigid, and the king's society was composed of his wife, his confessor La Chaise, the priest Letellier, and some other fanatics who had advised him to revoke the Edict of Nantes, by which his grandfather, Henry the Great, had insured peace and security to the Protestants.

In the midst of her grandeur, Madame de Maintenon was not happy: "Quelle corvée," she one day said to her brother, "d'avoir à amuser un homme qui n'est plus *amusable* !" The expression may have been true, but it was equally ungrateful. Her brother, who was much more worldly, but also more sensible of gratitude, replied: "Aviez-vous donc promis d'épouser Dieu le Père ?"

As soon as she was convinced that her marriage would never be proclaimed, Madame de Maintenon no longer dissembled the ennui she felt in the king's society, and spent much of her time at Saint Cyr, with the young people over whom she reigned. *There* she found some diversion to the weariness she confessed she experienced at court, for she wrote thus to one of her friends: "Que ne puis-je vous donner toute mon expérience? que ne puis-je vous faire voir l'ennui qui dévore les grands, et la peine qu'ils ont à remplir leur journée? . . . Ne voyez-vous pas que je meurs de tristesse dans une fortune qu'on aurait peine à imaginer? . . . Le roi ne sort pas de ma chambre. . . . Je ne le sens que trop; il n'est pas de dédommagement pour la perte de la liberté."

While Madame de Maintenon bestowed all her affections on Saint Cyr, Louis XIV. sometimes relieved the monotony of his existence by visiting Mademoiselle de la Chausseraye, who was the daughter of a gentleman named Lepelet de Verno, of Poitou, and became an indigent orphan at a very early age, but was adopted by her brother, who had her educated and conducted her to court. Through the interest of her maternal relatives, Biron, Villeroi, and Brissac, she was nominated maid of honour to

the Duchess of Orleans, and by her elegant manners and agreeable conversation attracted the notice of the king, who, often wearied with the rigid etiquette of his wife's stern court, was gratified to meet with a frank and simple-hearted woman.

Louis's attachment for Mademoiselle de la Chausseraye is little known; he first saw her in 1710, and is said to have entertained no other sentiment for her but that of friendship; nevertheless her influence was very great. He often corresponded with and visited her at her little Château de Madrid, near the Bois de Boulogne, where his liberalities enabled her to form a collection of curiosities which greatly amused the monarch. He also frequently sent for her to Versailles, where she went under pretext of visiting her intimate friend, the Duchess of Ventadour; and Madame Bloin, who usually conveyed the king's letters and messages to Mademoiselle de la Chausseraye, was in the habit of conducting her by a secret staircase to Louis's private apartments, where, free from the etiquette of his melancholy court, he took great pleasure in her cheerful and agreeable conversation.

Mademoiselle de la Chausseraye had friends amongst all classes of society, and, though not intimate with Madame de Maintenon, was on friendly

terms with her. She performed many gratuitous acts of kindness, often suffering the parties she had assisted to remain ignorant of their benefactress. During the regency of the Duke of Orleans, she preserved her friends at court, as well as her influence, which was never exercised but in a good cause; thus by her presence of mind she saved the Cardinal of Noailles, who was an object of persecution to the Jesuits, at the period when France was involved in religious quarrels. This prelate was much beloved by the Parisians, and the king gave his consent to his being seized, on going out of the capital, and conveyed to Rome to be deprived of his dignities. Mademoiselle de la Chausseraye, having discovered this conspiracy against the Archbishop of Paris, immediately sought him, and persuaded him not to leave the town, by which means she saved the good prelate severe humiliations and misfortunes.

Until his death Louis XIV. invariably honoured Mademoiselle de la Chausseraye with his friendship and confidence. She spent all her life in works of charity and devotion, and died in retirement at an advanced age in her Château de Madrid.

Madame de Maintenon's influence never ceased,

notwithstanding she devoted so much of her time and affection on Saint Cyr. *There* she received the homage of the young people whose fortunes she made. She could endure no rival, and consequently dismissed the original foundress of the establishment, the amiable and exemplary Madame de Brinon, who was reduced to indigence by the change, and nominated one of the pupils in her place, by which arrangement she became sole directress. She corresponded with the superiors of all the religious communities in France, of both sexes, giving them rules for their conduct, "et se croyait ainsi la mère de l'église et l'abbesse universelle." She frequently conducted her royal husband to Saint Cyr, where she made her pupils perform Racine's sacred tragedies in his presence. She even desired that the nuns should have their dresses made according to the prevailing fashion, and also that they should discard the wimple, which covers the neck and throat; and the pope, Innocent XI. (Odescalchi), who was in all other respects much gratified with the efforts Madame de Maintenon had made in favour of the Catholic religion, sanctioned this singular decree, saying that he could refuse nothing to *la dame du roi*.

She was, however, detested by the people, not

only on account of her participation in the king's acts of violence against the Protestants, but also for her choice of ministers, and her influence and interference in political affairs. At court she had very few friends. The Duchess of Burgundy, whom she used to call her *mignonne*, died young; and Madame de Glapion, whom she had appointed as superior at Saint Cyr, was more her servant and confidante than her friend. The Duke of Maine was the only being who was attached to her in her old age, and she made such unceasing endeavours to induce Louis XIV. to confer the regency on him by will, that the king, displeased at her importunity, threatened to exclude her own name from that document.

Madame de Maintenon retired to Saint Cyr a few days previous to Louis XIV.'s death, which occurred in 1715. Some authors say, in excuse for this act of ingratitude, that she was urged by Villeroi to do so, but her duty should have overruled all other persuasions. This once great monarch, when languishing through his last feeble hours, found his palace almost deserted, and his unworthy wife absent from his deathbed, beside which his faithful and devoted surgeon, Maréchal, remained almost alone. When Madame de Main-

tenon was about to quit him, he feelingly and affectionately said to her, "Je ne regrette que vous. Adieu: nous nous reverrons dans un monde meilleur."

Marshal Villeroi ordered a considerable body of guards to escort her to Saint Cyr, fearing that she might receive some injury from the justly irritated people, for she had been repeatedly hailed by furious clamours in the streets of Paris, and when the king was about to die there was no longer any security for her. On entering her favourite asylum she exclaimed, "Je ne veux que Dieu et mes enfans." The Duke of Orleans, whom she would have despoiled of the regency if she could have prevailed on Louis XIV. to nominate the Duke of Maine, generously forgot the injury she would have done him, and went to visit and console her at Saint Cyr: he also insisted on continuing her pension of forty-eight thousand francs, honourably declaring that Madame de Maintenon's disinterested conduct in regard of herself rendered it necessary.

In Saint Cyr she lived tranquilly and inexpensively, and devoted herself to the government of the community and to religious practices. She was sometimes visited by Madame Caylus, the Duke of

Noailles, Cardinal Rohan, and Marshal Villeroi; but her greatest pleasure was to receive her old pupil, the Duke of Maine. The dethroned queen of England was frequently a guest at the table of Madame de Maintenon, who was served by eight or nine young ladies of noble birth, whose duty it was also to read to her, and attend to all her personal concerns. After the repast, followed some hours of conversation, when the queen and Madame de Maintenon embraced each other, and the *maids of honour* accompanied the wife of James II. to her carriage. When Peter the Great visited France in 1717, he expressed a wish to see Louis XIV.'s widow, but was far from manifesting the same enthusiasm for her as Christina of Sweden displayed for Ninon de l'Enclos in her old age. Madame de Maintenon was confined to her bed when she received the czar, who entered her apartment, drew aside the curtains, stared at her for a few minutes, and retired without speaking a word.

Instead of being amiable and indulgent in her old age, she was stern and melancholy, and until her last moments appeared tormented with the remembrance of honours which were no longer rendered to her. Her last affections were centred in the Duke of Maine, whose exile for conspiracy

against the regent hastened her death. On being informed of his arrest, she prostrated herself at the foot of the altar, where her extreme agitation brought on a fever.

When she beheld her end approaching, she made liberal presents to all the poor in the neighbourhood, daily received the sacrament, and calmly declared to her relatives, Madame Caylus and the Duke of Noailles, that she left without regret a world in which she had experienced nothing but weariness. She expired in 1719, at the age of eighty-four, infirm in body, but sound in mind. Her remains were accompanied by all the young ladies of Saint Cyr to the church of that convent, and buried in the choir, with great solemnity, in presence of several bishops. Her tomb, which was destroyed during the revolution, was re-established in 1802 by the heads of the college of Saint Cyr. The only remarkable clause which her will contained is the following: "Je donne à Monsieur l'Archévêque de Rouen (d'Aubigné) le crucifix en velours noir qui est au chevet de mon lit, avec le petit portrait du roi qui est au-dessus, désirant qu'il soit gardé à jamais par ceux de mon nom qui le regarderont avec la vénération et la reconnaissance qu'ils lui doivent."

It is a singular fact that, while Madame de

Maintenon governed France, the Duchess of Marlborough ruled in England, and the Princess des Ursins in Spain, so that a great part of Europe was under the dominion of women.

Madame de Maintenon's favourite maxim was "Rien n'est plus adroit qu'une conduite irréprochable;" nevertheless she failed to practise it, for, though she possessed rare talents and some good qualities, she exercised her influence to the injury of the people and the national interest; and sacrificed the Protestants, and the religion of her birth, in order to obtain the sole wishes of her heart—her fatal marriage and the proclamation of it.

QUEEN MARIE LECKZINSKY.

(Reign of Louis XV.)

All Louis XIV.'s children and grandchildren descended to the tomb prematurely, and, of all that brilliant and numerous dynasty, one tender and feeble plant only survived him. He appointed his nephew, the Duke of Orleans, to be regent during the minority of the young king, Louis XV., although Madame de Maintenon, in order to induce

him to bestow it on her protégé, the Duke of Maine, insinuated to the king that the Duke of Orleans himself had spread the mourning veil over the royal house of Bourbon. But these odious suspicions were discarded when it was found that the regent surrounded the young king with every possible care, and felt the most lively solicitude for his delicate health, so that he surmounted all dangers, and lived to a good old age. The Duke of Orleans was a man of licentious habits, but he was not criminal; and, after the example already offered of the manner in which he performed his duty to Louis XV., it is unnecessary to deny another calumny with which he was insulted, namely, that he wished to have imprisoned the young king in the Bastille. The manner in which he acquitted himself of his duties to the state reflects honour upon his memory, but his irregularities cannot be excused; and though the brilliant conqueror of Steinkerque and Nerwinde frankly avowed his disorderly habits when reproached for them, the accusation of murder always roused his just indignation.

In 1692 he married Mary Frances de Bourbon, Mademoiselle de Blois, the *legitimated* daughter of Louis XIV. and Madame de Montespan. The duke's mother opposed the union for some time,

being astonished, as also were the courtiers, that the king should marry his nephew to one of his natural daughters; but they were so numerous that he could not find suitable establishments for all, and, having already placed some of them in the royal houses of Condé and Conti, he observed to the Duke of Orleans that, as the war rendered his union with a foreign princess impossible, he had selected one of his own daughters for him. In vain Madame the Duchess of Orleans wept, reproached her son, and it is said even struck him; in vain she assured Mademoiselle de Blois that her future husband loved another princess; she replied, "Je ne me souci pas qu'il m'aime, mais qu'il m'épouse;" and the marriage took place.

The young duchess possessed few personal attractions. She was tall, but not so much distinguished for grace as her mother; for she walked badly; her complexion, eyes, and arms were very beautiful, but her eyebrows were red, although her hair was auburn, and her cheeks large and pendant. She conversed with fluency, and inherited Madame de Montespan's graceful language and facility of elocution. She also maintained great dignity and reserve in the duke's scandalous court after he became regent, and was much admired

for the respectability of her retinue, her virtuous conduct, the care she bestowed on the education of her children, her sincere piety, and her patience under her husband's numerous infidelities. Amongst his many favourites were the Marchioness de Parabène, the Countess de Sabran, and the Duchess de Falari; he did not, however, suffer either of them to participate in the affairs of state. One day Madame de Sabran having attempted to speak to him respecting some political affairs and promotions, the prince conducted her to a mirror, and asked her if it was possible for a man to converse on business with so beautiful a face before him.

The Duchess of Orleans had much chagrin, not only on account of her husband's irregularities, but also her daughters' depravities, especially that of the eldest. The court, which had been restrained in its frivolous tastes and habits by the severity of Madame de Maintenon, threw aside the mask on the death of Louis XIV., and its liberty degenerated into immoderate licentiousness, which the regent encouraged by his example.

This prince, who was endowed with great valour and a penetrating mind, zealously attended to the affairs of state during the day, but each night was devoted to revelling with the roués and ladies of the

court, when all communication of any kind was interdicted, and the orgies known under the name of the *soupers du régent* continued until morning. At this epoch depravity so entirely invaded the manners of the highest class of society, that the Duchess of Longueville declared she did not like *innocent pleasures;* and the regent's mother, Elizabeth Charlotte of Bavaria, thus expresses herself: "Madame la Duchesse de Bourbon peut beaucoup boire sans perdre la tête; ses filles veulent l'imiter, mais elles n'ont pas la tête assez forte." With such examples the corruption was general; and under that influence, and in that atmosphere, the regent's daughters grew up, it being impossible for their mother to preclude their living in their father's court.

The eldest, who was married to Louis XIV.'s grandson, the Duke of Berri, was a catalogue of all the vices, avarice excepted. She publicly treated her mother with the utmost disdain, because she was the natural daughter of Louis XIV.; assumed the prerogative of a queen; had a throne erected for herself in the theatre; received the ambassadors in her apartments seated on an estrade beneath a canopy; always drove about Paris accompanied by a military band, which pre-

ceded her carriage; and persuaded her father, who idolised her, to give her a body-guard composed of fifty gentlemen. This princess is suspected of having poisoned her husband, who was very amiable, and who, according to Saint Simon, endeavoured for a length of time to induce her to give up her dissolute mode of life, but, finding his efforts useless, plainly declared to her that, if she did not attend to his counsels and put a term to her disorderly conduct, he would place her in a convent. Shortly after this menace, the Duke of Berri, when dining with his wife at Versailles, was suddenly seized with convulsions, of which he died, after drinking some mulled wine which the duchess herself had prepared for him; it was, however, generally reported that the prince while hunting had met with an injury which brought on a vomiting of blood that caused his death.

The Duchess of Orleans was not more fortunate in her other daughters, and, wishing the second, Mademoiselle de Chartres, to avoid the evil example of her elder sister, resolved that she should enter the cloister. In 1719 she was named Abbess of the Benedictines of Chelles, in place of Madame Villars; but the veil did not preserve Mademoiselle

de Chartres from engaging in worldly amusements and vices; she frequently followed the chase, and spent whole days in making fireworks and in pistol-shooting. Having grown weary of her abbey at Chelles, in 1734 she repaired to the priory of the Benedictines of the Madelaine du Traisnel at Paris, where she studied theology, embraced Jansenism, and, while her fanaticism lasted, signed her letters "*l'épouse de Jésus Christ.*"

The younger sister, Mademoiselle de Valois, imitated the Duchess of Berri in her dissolute mode of life, and, like her, found little pleasure in the society of the Duchess of Orleans and her small circle of exemplary friends.

The regent had great esteem for his wife, who lived in a retired manner and spent a great portion of her time with Madame Sforce, daughter of Madame de Thianges, relieving her voluntary solitude by the charms of literature, which she encouraged. Nevertheless, she frequently expressed herself impatient for the approach of death, declaring herself weary of her existence,—one of the many proofs that happiness does not always dwell with elevated rank or wealth; for her husband skilfully governed one of the largest empires in the world,

and she was the possessor of three millions of francs (a considerable sum in those days), and jewels to the amount of two hundred thousand crowns.

The Duchess of Orleans died in 1749, leaving one son, Louis Philip Duke of Orleans, and seven daughters.

After the death of the regent, who had negotiated a marriage for Louis XV. with the Infanta of Spain, the Duke of Bourbon became prime minister, and, perceiving that his young master, who was then sixteen years of age, had no great affection for his future wife, who was only six, proposed that he should espouse a princess that was older, and a council was held upon the subject. Accordingly the Infanta was sent back to Spain under the pretext that it was necessary to provide France with a queen immediately, and that the extreme youth of Maria Theresa would prevent her marriage from taking place for some years. A large escort and brilliant honours attended the young princess on her return to Spain; nevertheless Philip V. keenly felt the affront which had been offered to his daughter, and manifested his resentment by sending his eldest son's widow back to France, as also Mademoiselle de Beaujolais, who was affianced to the Infant Don Carlos, both of whom were daughters of the regent;

no doubt his mortification was increased in consequence of the sovereign pontiff Clement XI.'s (Albani) having approved of the measure.

The Czarina Catherine I. offered to bestow her daughter Elizabeth on Louis XV., but the Duke of Bourbon, who was entirely governed by his favourite the Marchioness de Prie, a very talented but dissolute woman, refused this eligible alliance, as the marchioness feared her authority would be restrained by an energetic queen. Through Madame de Prie's influence also, the minister sacrificed the best interests of his own family, having refused the crown for his sister, Mademoiselle de Vermandois, who possessed strictly virtuous morals: this princess frankly expressed her disapproval and contempt of her brother's mistress and her immoral conduct, and was therefore rejected by the weak-minded Duke of Bourbon.

The Marchioness de Prie, wishing to preserve the direction of affairs, fixed her choice on a princess whose well-known timidity and reserve were the consequence of a long series of misfortunes, and Marie Leckzinsky gratefully closed her eyes upon the vices of the woman through whose influence she ascended the throne; and after the Duke of Bourbon's banishment, sincerely pitied the fate of

the beautiful and ambitious marchioness, who, unable to support her grief at her own and the duke's disgrace, poisoned herself at Courbépine, to which place she was exiled.

Marie Charlotte Sophie Félicité Leckzinsky was the daughter of Stanislaus I., King of Poland and Duke of Lorraine and Bar, and of Catherine Opalinska, a descendant of one of the most ancient chiefs of Lithuania: she was born at Posen in 1703. From her cradle Marie Leckzinsky was besieged by misfortunes. Her father, the faithful ally of Charles XII., King of Sweden, by whose aid he ascended the throne of Poland, shared the reverses which befell the Swedish monarch. After the defeat at Pultawa in 1709, Stanislaus and his family were obliged to quit Warsaw, which he could not defend, and in their precipitate retreat his daughter was abandoned by her governess, who, in order to accelerate her own flight, left the princess with the baggage in a small public-house, where she was found in the loft of the stable.

Stanislaus, for whose head a price was offered by the diet, and also by his competitor Augustus, resided with his daughter for some time on the confines of the Baltic Sea, and afterwards in Pomerania; and, while Charles XII. was at Bender, took

up his abode at Deux Ponts. At length, to insure repose, he requested an asylum in France, where he and his daughter were received by the Duke of Orleans, in 1720, with the greatest kindness and respect. The regent having offered him his choice of a residence, Stanislaus fixed on Weissemburg.

At this period the Princess of Poland was seventeen years of age, and, notwithstanding her father's reverses, had received a careful education, he having cultivated her mind during their retirement: amongst other acquirements, she was an excellent linguist, speaking six different languages with fluency.

At an epoch of almost unparalleled depravity, in which women virtuously educated like Marie Leckzinsky were few, her strict morality and honourable misfortunes induced several sensible men, who appreciated her merit, to seek her hand; amongst others she refused matrimonial offers from two sovereign princes of Germany, having felt an attachment for the Count d'Estrées, an officer of the garrison at Weissemburg, who was young, intellectual, and in every respect worthy of her. The count respectfully expressed his wishes to the deposed monarch, who, being aware of his daughter's sentiments, promised to grant his consent to

her marriage with him, provided Louis XV. would give him the title of duke and peer of France.

This favour, which was accorded some time after, was refused at that time, but Marie always preserved the remembrance of her first attachment, and when queen, on receiving the Duchess d'Estrées after her marriage, remarked, "Je pourrais être à la place de cette dame, et venir faire ici la révérence à la Reine de France."

When the Duke of Bourbon had decided upon placing Marie Leckzinsky on the throne, the Cardinal Prince de Rohan, Bishop of Strasbourg, was sent to Stanislaus to demand her hand in marriage. The dethroned monarch received this consoling offer in his retreat at Weissemburg, and, falling on his knees, energetically thanked God for the blessing he had vouchsafed him, and, embracing his daughter, joyfully informed her that she was Queen of France. The Duke of Orleans, son of the late regent, repaired to Strasbourg, and married the princess in the king's name, and the ceremony was performed by the Cardinal de Rohan.

Louis XV. was accompanied by the court to Moret, and conducted the queen to Fontainebleau, where the marriage was realised in 1725.

Marie Leckzinsky was seven years older than

the young king, who duly appreciated the excellence of her character. The first years of their marriage were not, like those of Louis XIV., and Maria Theresa, devoted to tournaments and public entertainments, but spent in comparative retirement; and Louis XV., who fondly cherished his wife, left Versailles only to visit Rambouillet, the residence of the Count of Toulouse, whose wife was a woman of polished manners and virtuous habits, and whose society accorded with her character, and was very agreeable to the king. They were all friends of the Bishop of Fréjus, who was much gratified at his former pupil's choice of company; the Duke of Bourbon was also pleased by it, because he was more at liberty to govern according to his own will; but numerous murmurs against his administration soon caused his disgrace, and the affairs of state passed into the hands of the king's old and attached preceptor Fleury, whom he made a cardinal.

The life of Louis XV., whose kingdom was skilfully governed by Fleury, was very monotonous: naturally timid, his whole pleasure consisted in the bosom of his family, and the nation became inert and indolent from the example of the court, and above all the monarch, whose apathy had been

increased by the indulgence of it during his childhood, as his guardians had been always fearful of fatiguing his delicate constitution. Several of the elder courtiers, amongst others Villars and Fleury, remonstrated with him on the subject, and induced him to be more active. Louis, who was only sixteen years of age at the time of his marriage, was so much attached to his wife, that he beheld in her many charms which she did not actually possess, so that, when prevailed on to enlarge his circle of society, it was not long before this happy illusion was destroyed by interested and ambitious courtiers.

The person who first tempted the young monarch to break his conjugal faith was Louisa Julia de Nesle, daughter of the Marquis de Nesle, and of Louisa de la Porte Mazarin: she was born at Paris in 1710. At the age of sixteen she married her cousin Louis Alexandre de Mailly, and in 1729 succeeded her mother in the office of superintendent of the queen's household. The Countess de Mailly was not beautiful, but she had much vivacity and highly polished manners; moreover, she possessed remarkable taste in dress. Her husband, who was displeased at the attendance of the king, remonstrated; upon which he was sent out of France by an appointment to an embassy.

This lady never exercised her influence over Louis to procure either wealth or aggrandizement for herself or her relatives, but she instilled most depraved principles into Louis's mind, and was the first to establish the *petit soupers*, which scandalized all the court. She had four sisters—Madame de Ventimille, the Duchess de Laraguais, the Marchioness de la Tournelle, and Madame de Flavacour. The youngest of them, who was at a convent, being dazzled with the power and influence of the Countess de Mailly, entreated her to take her to court, where she made successful efforts to please the king and supplant her sister; she however died in giving birth to the Count de Luc, in 1741.

After her death the Duchess de Laraguais is said to have been the favourite, but she was soon discarded, and the Countess de Mailly restored; her favour did not, however, last long, as Louis manifested a much greater attachment for another of the Marquis de Nesle's daughters, the Marchioness de la Tournelle, and Madame de Mailly was obliged to resign her situation of superintendent of the queen's household, after which she lived in retirement. Converted by the eloquent and pious counsels of Père Renaud of the Oratoire, she became as virtuous and modest in her conduct as she had for-

merly been disreputable and immoral; she expiated the scandal she had caused by rigid penance, and died, sincerely repenting her faults, in 1751, aged forty-two years.

The Countess de Mailly, unlike most of the royal favourites, was never injurious to the state; she neither bestowed favours nor exercised vengeance. Once only she participated in the affairs of government, by energetically entreating the king to save the remains of the French troops in Bohemia, whom the old Cardinal Fleury had abandoned from motives of timid parsimony.

Her sister, Anne Mary de Nesle, who supplanted her, was married at the age of seventeen to the Marquis de la Tournelle, who left her a widow at twenty-three. This lady far surpassed all her sisters in personal charms; she was also a talented musician. In 1742 Louis XV. gave her the appointment of *dame du palais* to the queen, who was condemned to be brought into contact with all her husband's favourites in consequence of their functions obliging them to have apartments in the palace.

The Marchioness, on causing her sister's dismissal, persuaded Louis to give her a pension of thirty-six thousand francs a year, and pay her debts,

which amounted to seven hundred and sixty thousand livres. She also obtained a pension of eighty thousand francs for herself, a splendid hôtel in Paris, and the title of Duchess de Châteauroux.

In vain the queen, who dreaded new affronts on the appearance of a new favourite, endeavoured, with the assistance of the Count de Maurepas and Cardinal Fleury, to maintain the cause of the Countess de Mailly; the duchess possessed an intriguing spirit, and easily subjugated the indolent monarch, who was not alarmed at the prospect of his mistress assuming the burthen of state affairs.

As long as the king considered his queen the fairest and most amiable of women, Marie Leckzinsky was the happiest and most enviable of wives; but when the cruel truth of his changed sentiments became apparent to her, she sought to relieve her desolation by the resources which her well-cultivated mind afforded. She regulated her daily employment, rose early, attended mass, visited the king, received the princes and ambassadors, and then returned to her own apartments, where she amused herself with making crayon drawings and reading, and, with the aid of a small printing-machine, made impressions of prayers and moral precepts of her own composition. She

partook of her repasts in public, in order that all who wished might see her, for she was universally esteemed and beloved. In her own apartments she superintended the making of every description of refreshments which were requisite for the sick-room of the poor, as well as all kinds of wearing apparel, from the cradle-robe to the coffin-shroud. She frequently caused a table to be laid for the workmen in the château, that she might have the pleasure of seeing them enjoy their repast. During a reign of forty-three years, Marie Leckzinsky never gave fêtes, because she said the people paid for them by the "sweat of their brow;" the expense of her marriage was the only charge the state was required to defray on her account.

Although her heart was daily breaking in consequence of the numberless infidelities and the altered character of her husband, Marie never permitted herself to reproach him, or relinquished the moderation and gentleness which she always manifested towards him, but buried her sorrows in her own bosom, save when she poured them forth to Heaven in her oratory.

The king's frequent absences often obliged the queen to receive the foreign ambassadors and dignitaries of the state; but although she possessed

talent, she never interfered in the administration. The Duke of Bourbon having once asked her to take a more active part in the government, she replied, "Les Français accordent tout aux femmes, excepté le droit de les gouverner."

While Marie Leckzinsky was pining in isolation for the loss of the affection of Louis XV., the Duchess de Châteauroux was the sole possessor of it. But, though proud and ambitious, this favourite contrived to rouse him from his idleness and apathy. Like another Agnes Sorel, she urged him to put himself at the head of his army in Flanders and Alsace; and his kingdom was indebted to his bravery and resolution for the victory of Fontenay.

In 1744 Louis XV. was attacked with a putrid fever at Metz, and was so dangerously ill that his life was despaired of. During his indisposition the Duchess de Châteauroux never quitted him, but attended him with most affectionate and anxious solicitude, assisted by the Duke of Richelieu, first gentleman of the chamber. This nobleman was desirous of concealing the king's dangerous state from him, in order, as he said, to spare him the terrors of death; but the Duke de Chartres, who was first prince of the blood royal, assisted by

Fitzjames, Bishop of Soissons, the king's almoner, announced it to him, and the prelate exhorted him to prepare himself for the awful change which awaited him by first renouncing the sin of an illegitimate attachment. The king became resigned, and, although he declared his favourite was all that he regretted in the world, yielded to the bishop's solicitations, and sent the duchess an order for her departure by the Count d'Argenson.

Although the Duchess de Châteauroux was generally liked because her influence over the king had been exerted for his benefit as well as that of the nation, her departure was accompanied by great opprobrium on the part of the people, who believed that she had been instrumental in causing the king's malady ; and this brilliant favourite, who entered Metz in triumph, could not find a carriage in which to leave the town : she was, therefore, provided with a conveyance and escort by the Marshal de Bellisle; nevertheless she reached Paris at the risk of her life.

On her dismissal, the queen arrived at Metz to offer her attentions to the king, whom she found in an improved condition and desirous of repairing the injuries and injustice he had done her. The

people, who were delighted to find their sovereign restored to life and virtue together, proclaimed him the *bien-aimé*, and gave way throughout all France to inexpressible enthusiasm; on his return to Paris he was overwhelmed with demonstrations of affection, so that he inquired what he had done to merit so much love.

In the mean time the discarded duchess pined in obscurity, but Louis, who was surrounded by corrupt advisers, yielded to his natural weakness, and resumed his criminal habits. Notwithstanding his professions to the queen, he eagerly sought to make the Duchess de Châteauroux forget the affront she had received at Metz, and accordingly obliged the Count d'Argenson to present the letter of recall to her in person; and the Bishop of Soissons, who had done nothing more than perform the strict line of duty which his ministry required of him, was exiled to his diocese. But this triumph of vice was of short duration; the joy that the duchess felt at her reinstatement, and some neglect in the care of her health, caused a physical revolution which destroyed her a few days after her return to court. In vain her sister, Madame de Mailly, left her retreat to offer her the proofs of her affection and solicitude, and as vainly did

Louis summon all the aid which his kingdom could produce; her death, which occurred in 1744, opened a career for the Marquis de Nesle's fifth daughter, Madame de Flavacour, but this lady repulsed the offers and professions of Louis XV. with laudable perseverance; her exemplary life was free from the storms which agitated those of her sisters, and she justified the friendship with which Marie Leckzinsky honoured her.

His own dangerous illness, and the duchess's sudden and melancholy end, was a fearful lesson for the king, but it was lost upon him. When engaged in his favourite amusement of hunting, he frequently met Madame Lenormand d'Etioles in the forest of Senart, near which that lady resided. Attracted by her grace and beauty, he sent her the produce of the chace, and, not content with this overture, invited her to a masked ball which was given by the Parisians to the dauphin in honour of his marriage with Maria Theresa, the Infanta of Spain, in 1744; and availed himself of the confusion of the fête to declare his passion.

Jane Antoinette Poissan was born at Ferté-sous-Jouarre, in 1722. Her father, who was victualler to the Hôtel des Invalides, was ruined through some dishonourable management, and obliged to seek

another fortune in a foreign country, leaving his daughter in France with her mother, who possessed the means of giving her a brilliant education, aided by Lenormand de Tournehem, under-steward of the farms belonging to the revenue, and one of her relations.

Mademoiselle Poissan was an excellent musician, and drew and engraved with much taste and accuracy. Her mother, who was of low origin, instilled into her mind the criminal idea of endeavouring to captivate the heart of the monarch, and with this view induced her to follow him to the hunt, where, by her graceful horsemanship, she could not fail to attract his notice. Although Madame Poissan often repeated that none but a prince was worthy of possessing a woman endowed with so many advantages as her daughter, she gave her in marriage to her nephew Augustus Lenormand d'Etioles, who, on discovering the encouragement his young wife gave Louis XV., openly complained; but was appointed to the office of farmer-general to the revenue, with directions to be silent. His obsequious obedience to this command gave the king so much satisfaction, that he shortly after made him a royal equerry.

Madame d'Etioles had a mixture of cunning and melancholy in the expression of her countenance; her complexion was very fair, and her figure, arms, and hands remarkably beautiful.

Louis at first provided her with a house at Versailles; but afterwards gave her apartments in the château, where each year her extravagances increased. Louis XV., though avaricious by instinct, was prodigal through weakness; he gave Madame d'Etioles six estates, besides splendid hôtels in Paris, Fontainebleau, and Compiègne, where she amassed such a considerable quantity of furniture and other valuables, that after her death the sale occupied each day during the space of twelve months. He gave her a pension of fifteen hundred thousand livres, besides daily presents, independently of which she had six hundred thousand livres to enable her to have her table always served for the reception of her royal lover, who also created her Marchioness of Pompadour.

The ceremony of her presentation at court took place with great éclat, the king having requested the Princess de Conti to introduce her, and her respectful behaviour induced the queen to admit her occasionally at her table; but this un-

deserved honour was not long continued. After her own elevation, she directed her attention to that of her family. Her brother was named Marquis de Marigui, and the superintendent of public buildings. Louis XV. called this person *petit frère*, as the Count Dubarri afterwards called him *frérot*.

In 1752 Madame de Pompadour received the title and office of *dame du palais*, very much in opposition to the wishes of the queen and many of the courtiers, not only because it was a post exclusively reserved for ladies holding the rank of duchess, but also because her immoral conduct rendered her unfit for so honourable an appointment.

With the exception of the Prince and Princess of Conti, who were on friendly terms with her, the royal family visited her only to please the king. One of the chevaliers of Saint Louis was her equerry; she always had young ladies of noble birth to wait on her; and her daughter, when only fifteen years of age, had the equipage of a king's daughter, and was always called *Madame Alexandrine*, or *Mademoiselle*, like the princesses of the blood royal.

Madame de Pompadour, knowing Louis's aver-

sion to business, resolved to relieve him of that burthen, and assumed the reins of government herself: but, like Madame de Maintenon, either through mischance or a combination of circumstances, she was not fortunate in her choice of ministers; perhaps submission and flattery formed the great merits of those whom they selected. In 1749 the marchioness dismissed the Count de Maurepas, who was much beloved by the king, and had held the office of minister of marine for the space of twenty-seven years, because he wrote some insulting epigrams upon her, and gave the place to Monsieur de Bouillé, who knew nothing of naval affairs; and, in opposition to the unanimous voice of the country, elevated the Prince of Soubise to the dignity of Marshal of France, and appointed him to a command, the result of which choice was the unfortunate defeat at Rosbach in the year 1756.

The Marchioness de Pompadour possessed the talent of amusing the indolent king, who frequently remarked that she made the time pass quickly; in fact, she conceived the most ingenious artifices to divert him. At the expense of the revenue, she built a small house at Versailles, called the Hermitage, where she received the

monarch sometimes in the garb of a milk-maid or shepherdess, at others in the guise of a grey-sister or abbess. Her occupations in the administration of public affairs did not prevent her from partaking of recreation. In all the royal residences she erected theatres, in which she sometimes performed herself. At Bellevue she played the part of Colette in '*Le Devin du Village*;' and to recompense Voltaire for an opera which he wrote for her, she gave him the titles of gentleman of the king's chamber and historiographer of France. She also tried to attach Jean Jacques Rousseau to her, but the indigent philosopher, to whom she sent a present of twelve louis-d'ors, refused to accept anything beyond the price of his work.

She loved literature and the fine arts, and encouraged and favoured Montesquieu, Buffon, Maupertius, and all the literary characters of the period. She also carried her love of luxury to a high degree, and by the introduction of voluptuous manners corrupted the court and town, and wasted the revenue, while she considered that she repaired these evils sufficiently by favouring the agricultural views of political economists.

The talents of this ambitious favourite cannot, however, be disputed. The illustrious Maria Theresa of

Austria appreciated her judgment and influence; and to obtain the co-operation of France with the view of recovering Silesia from Frederick II., King of Prussia, this proud descendant of Rodolph of Hapsbourg did not disdain to correspond with Madame de Pompadour, whom in her confidential letters she styled her *amie et bonne cousine,* and whose self-love the Prussian monarch had offended by some satirical remarks: she accordingly induced Louis XV. to forget the enmity which had existed between France and Austria for the space of two centuries, and the treaty of Vienna was the result of this reconciliation. Maria Theresa testified her acknowledgment and regard for the favourite by sending her her own portrait splendidly set in diamonds.

During the time that the Marchioness de Pompadour was the distributor of all the royal gifts and government employments, it required but a little adulation to obtain her favour, but sarcasm or criticisms on her conduct she never forgave. Some flattering stanzas which the Abbé Bernis addressed to her, purchased him her protection; she gave him a bishopric, with a pension of six thousand livres, and afterwards elevated him to the post of minister of foreign affairs. Some years

after, having heard that he had uttered some contemptuous remarks respecting her conduct, her resentment was unbounded, and she declared that she would replace him in the obscurity from which she had drawn him; he was consequently disgraced and exiled. Amongst others who suffered for wounding her self-love was a young officer of the engineers named Latude, who for composing some satirical lines upon her was thrown into one of the dungeons of the Bastille, where he was detained a close prisoner for the space of thirty-five years.

On assuming the direction of public affairs, Madame de Pompadour considered it necessary to consolidate herself in her post of favourite. Politic in her projects, ambition supplied the place of love; she was therefore never tormented with jealous fears; but to secure herself from dangerous rivals who might have supplanted her, she built, in 1754, the *Parc aux Cerfs* near the forest of Satory at Versailles, where she assembled a number of young ladies, who had no merit beyond their personal attractions, to divert the passing affections of the indolent king. By this means the marchioness introduced corruption into numerous families, and Louis XV., who was the Christian king of a Christian country, despising morality and disregarding

the contempt of all Europe, became the Sardanapalus of modern times, perverted all classes of society, and wasted upon these vulgar beauties sums of money which would for years have maintained numerous fleets and considerable armies. It is estimated that upwards of a hundred millions of francs were squandered upon this disgraceful establishment, which was suppressed in 1768. There exist a multitude of Memoirs of this period of the life of Louis XV., the details of which would doubtless be better buried in oblivion than produced even with their due allowance of censure.

While private profligacy increased at court, public disorders augmented throughout the kingdom. There were troubles in the Church, schisms among the bishops, agitations among the magistracy, discord among families, and disturbances among the people. In 1757 the king was stabbed on stepping into his carriage by a man named Damiens; but the blow was not mortal: the ruffian confessed that he was urged to commit the crime by the general discontent. On receiving the news of this catastrophe, Madame de Pompadour left the palace, and the dauphin, who had always been kept in restraint by his father and unemployed in the affairs of state, was summoned to the council; but

when the general alarm for the king's safety had dissipated, the favourite returned triumphantly, and the Count d'Argenson, who had loudly exulted at her fall, was immediately disgraced; after which few men of vigour or talent remained in the ministry.

The reverses of the French army, which were imputed to the consequences of the war of *Sept Ans*, were a subject of serious regret and melancholy to Madame de Pompadour, and interfered with the enjoyment of her power. Her anxiety on the occasion is observable in her letters; for the details of that war are no less inglorious to France than the motives for entering upon it were unjust, or the policy which directed it was imprudent.

For more than two years before her death she suffered from debility, and gradually sunk into the grave. Feeling the end of her shameful career approach when at Choisi, she caused herself to be removed to Versailles, and in 1764 finished her days in the king's palace, where the royal family alone have the privilege of dying. A few moments before her death, after arranging her dress, she sent for the curate of the parish, who communicated the sacrament to her, and, after having performed

his functions, was about to retire, when she said to him, "Attendez, monsieur; nous partirons ensemble," and expired. She was forty-two years of age at the time of her decease. Far from regretting her, Louis XV., who was then neither attached to her by esteem for her character or admiration of her charms, which had faded, appeared glad to be freed by her death from any further occasion for committing crime. Alas! but a short interval elapsed before his courage was exhausted, notwithstanding the efforts of his amiable wife to win him back to the virtuous life he had so long abandoned.

He displayed little emotion on seeing Madame de Pompadour's corpse pass beneath his windows when conveyed to her own hôtel, and at the hour appointed for the funeral looked at the sky, and said, "La marquise aura mauvais temps pour son dernier voyage." Nevertheless, during her illness he paid her unceasing attention, and always consulted her on political affairs; until her last moments she took an active part in the administration, and died with the reins of government in her hand. It is remarkable that Louis felt so little regret at his separation from a woman who for twenty years had borne the weight of government, unfortunate as her

administration was for France, for no favourite had ever possessed such extensive power as the Marchioness de Pompadour. Although Madame de Maintenon exercised her influence in directing the choice of ministers, Louis XIV., enfeebled as he was, never permitted her the exclusive right of governing; it was reserved for Louis XV. to offer to all Europe the example of a monarch who was so contemptible as to abandon the sceptre which his birth had conferred on him into the hands of a mistress, and thus prove himself unworthy to bear it. It is but justice, however, to add, that she caused the erection of the *Ecole Militaire* and the manufactory of porcelain at Sèvres.

When she assumed the government of the state and the prerogatives of a queen, the frequent journeys of the court to Compiègne brought Marie Leckzinsky into such close contact with her, that the queen retired to the convent of the Carmelites in that town, which she endowed and was much attached to. She also favoured the Jesuits, and succoured them when banished, by requesting her father to afford them an asylum in Lorraine, and, after his death, entreated Louis XV. to permit them to remain there—a request which he granted. Amongst the literary characters whose

society and works she valued were Monterief and Henaut.

Marie Leckzinsky attended to the education of her children with exemplary care, and was repaid by their amiable and dutiful conduct; but she had the misfortune to lose several. The Duke of Anjou died at the age of two years and six months; in 1733 she lost the Princess Marie, who also died young; and in 1752, the Princess Henrietta, who was twenty-four years of age. She was greatly afflicted at the death of the dauphin's first wife, Maria Theresa, who died in her accouchement, but was consoled by the Dauphine Marie Josephine, who replaced her. This princess was the daughter of Augustus II., who had dethroned Marie Leckzinsky's father, Stanislaus. On her first introduction at the court of France, etiquette obliged her to wear, amongst other ornaments, a bracelet adorned with the portrait of her father. Marie Leckzinsky was unwilling to cast her eyes upon the resemblance of one who had been so bitter an enemy to her beloved parent, but resigned herself to the usual custom, not wishing her young daughter-in-law to think that animosity reigned in her heart; she therefore said to the timid girl, "Ma fille, voilà donc le portrait de votre père?"

"Oui, maman," replied the dauphine; "voyez comme il est ressemblant!" at the same time she placed it before the eyes of the queen, who beheld the portrait of her father Stanislaus. This little anecdote affords a proof of the amiable disposition of the princess, for whom Marie Leckzinsky entertained a sincere affection; but she had the misfortune to lose her virtuous son the dauphin in 1762, and the dauphine, worthy wife of so excellent a prince, survived him only fifteen months. She injured her health by her zealous assiduities to her husband during his illness, and the regret she felt at his loss, and the fatigue she underwent in educating her children, undermined her strength. The same tomb at Sens contains the ashes of this amiable pair. The Queen of France extended her benevolence to the other children of Augustus II., who in their turn were forced to expatriate, but at her solicitations received a safe asylum from Stanislaus in Lorraine.

The loss of these children, added to the grief she experienced at the unfortunate accident which caused her father's death, threw Marie Leckzinsky into a state of languor from which she never recovered. The old king, Stanislaus, who had been the idol of Lorraine for thirty years, fell a victim to

an accident; the fire in his apartment having caught his dressing-gown at a moment when he happened to be alone, and his cries for assistance not having reached any of his attendants.

During the queen's illness, which assumed a serious appearance in 1768, the château was always surrounded with crowds of anxious inquirers, and Louis XV., who appreciated these marks of public respect, which were offered to virtue, exclaimed, "Voyez donc comme elle est aimée!" Her malady was of an extraordinary nature, as it entirely suspended the faculties of her mind, and gave her the appearance, even when awake, of being in an uneasy slumber. After she had breathed her last sigh, the king, whose esteem for his wife had never forsaken him, advanced towards the bed on which the corpse lay, and once more embraced the mother of his ten children.

After her death her dresses and other objects were cut in pieces and preserved by the people as precious relics; she was called *La Sainte Reine*, and during eight days her body lay in state to gratify the nation that so much venerated her. Monsieur Poucet de la Rivière, Bishop of Troyes, delivered her funeral oration at Notre Dame de Paris. An immense congregation, who

had assembled on the occasion, forgetting in their enthusiasm the respect which was due to the sanctity of the church, burst forth into loud acclamations of applause, when the orator, addressing himself to the Archbishop of Paris, exclaimed, "Pontife du Dieu vivant, ne craignez pas d'offrir sur le tombeau de la reine un encens que nos neveux brûleront peut-être un jour sur ses autels."

The union of Louis XV. with Marie Leckzinsky has been blamed as too modest, compared with the marriage originally determined on with the Infanta of Spain; it nevertheless added an important province to the kingdom, for, on the death of Stanislaus, Lorraine belonged by treaty to France, in compensation for the throne of Poland.

It might be supposed that the death of this excellent woman would have left a wholesome effect upon the king's mind, but his intimacy with the Countess Dubarri shows that he was insensible to any virtuous impressions except such as were of the most evanescent nature.

This lady, who was equally celebrated for her beauty, profligacy, and unfortunate end, was the daughter of a farmer named Gomart de Vaubernier, in Vaucouleurs, and was born in 1746. Her father having died, leaving his widow without fortune, she

was obliged to enter service at Paris. Fortunately the young girl had a rich godfather named Dumonceau, who was in the commissariat department, and who undertook to defray the expenses of her education at the convent of Saint Aure, where he placed her. Thinking that he had accomplished his duty towards his goddaughter, Monsieur Dumonceau saw nothing of her after her education was completed, and Mademoiselle Gomart de Vaubernier, being without either an asylum or resources, obtained employment at a dress-maker's in Paris. The description of her occupations, the brilliant women whom she beheld, and the many indiscreet remarks upon her beauty which she was constantly in the habit of hearing, gave rise to the dreams of a romantic imagination, and disgusted her with her employment.

She was desirous of living in a less humble sphere, and imagined that her personal charms entitled her to wealth and prosperity. With such sentiments it was not long before Mademoiselle de Gomart fell into some of the many snares which beset the path of the inexperienced and friendless. One of her relations introduced her into the house of a lady of quality who had dissipated her fortune, and was endeavouring to retrieve it by gambling.

At one of this lady's suppers, the young girl, who had taken the name of Lange, attracted the attention of the Count Dubarri, a gentleman of Gascony, who, finding her indifferent to his offers, gave his consent to her marriage with his brother. They were descendants of the ancient and noble house of Barrymore in Ireland; nevertheless the fear of tarnishing the name by so disproportionate an alliance was not taken into consideration, and the marriage took place in 1768.

The Countess Dubarri was universally admired, and the report of her beauty reached the ears of Lebel, the king's valet-de-chambre, who lost no time in procuring her an interview with his royal master, upon whom her personal charms made a lively impression. She was possessed of little talent, and had no ambitious views, so that her frank and simple manners delighted him, and even those ladies at court who did not like her rendered justice to her candour, sweetness of temper, and complacency. It has also been remarked that, after she became attached to Louis XV., she never gave cause for suspecting her conduct or affection by the smallest act of indiscretion: but her prodigality was ruinous to France.

She always used gold plate, and possessed a cup

of that metal of enormous value, which was given her by the king. The Duke of Aiguillon, in order to render himself agreeable to the monarch, presented her with a magnificent carriage which cost fifty-two thousand francs. On the day of her fête Louis XV. gave her a bouquet of diamonds valued at three hundred thousand francs, and also a dressing-table of massive gold, surmounted by two Cupids of the same metal holding a crown enriched with precious stones, and so ingeniously disposed that she could not look on the mirror without beholding herself crowned. On receiving the order for this extravagant piece of furniture, the astonished artist required the sum of four hundred marks in advance. Independently of these prodigalities, Madame Dubarri gave at play drafts for large sums at sight, which the Abbé Terray and the court banker Beaujon paid with greater exactitude than the expenses of the government. To meet the exigencies of her husband and brother-in-law, the countess drew more than eighteen millions from the treasury, but she did not partake of that sum, and beyond the gifts of the king she made neither acquisitions nor savings.

As etiquette prevented her appearing at court without an introduction, Louis XV. resolved that

she should be presented with all the usual ceremony: several ladies refused their patronage, but at length Madame du Béarn consented to render her this service; and from that time the countess made use of the royal carriages, dined with the king, received visits from the ambassadors, and was present at all the great court entertainments. This favour to a woman whose origin was base, and who was encouraging the weak monarch to plunge into every species of prodigality and excess, dishonouring him still more than he had already dishonoured himself, and rendering him an object of profound contempt to his people, caused the retirement of Madame de Beauveau and the Duchesses de Choiseul and Grammont, who disdained to associate with Madame Dubarri, and several others followed their example. But Louis, forgetting all decency and the respect which he owed to his own family, brought her into close intimacy with the princesses; and there is every reason to believe that her objection to the favourite's society, and the fear of displeasing her father by a refusal to join in it, was the cause which determined his daughter Louisa to take the veil in the austere order of the Carmelites, in 1770.

Although the princesses could not be present at the king's parties, at which the countess presided,

without severe mortification, yet all frankly confessed their admiration of her beauty, elegance, and good-nature; and when, in 1770, Louis asked the dauphine, recently arrived in France, her opinion of the favourite, who was admitted at the princess's table, she replied with a tone of conviction that she thought her truly bewitching.

Although the countess had many enemies, yet, all-powerful as she was, and often insulted and outraged, she was never known to revenge herself, but performed many acts of benevolence; and in this respect both merited and acquired many honourable friends. The Prince of Condé and other noble families sought an alliance with hers; the Duke of Richelieu and the Chancellor Maupeou called her *cousine*, and the Duke of Orleans consulted her on a marriage which he projected with Madame de Montesson, desiring to obtain, through her, the king's consent to that union; upon which occasion Madame Dubarri said to him, "Allez, gros-père, épousez toujours . . . nous verrons ensuite . . . j'y suis moi-même fortement intéressée." These words are a sufficient proof that she hoped herself to be united to Louis XV.

In her elevated state the countess did not forget her former position, but generously sent for her god-

father, Dumonceau, who had so cruelly abandoned her to herself without guidance or good counsel; the old man appeared at court, dreading the animosity of his god-daughter, but she loaded him with presents, and appeared to have forgotten that he had ever acted unkindly to her. She also entreated pardon for the Count and Countess Louerme, who were condemned to death for rebellion; the king hesitated on account of the serious nature of their offence, but she embraced his knees, and appealed so pathetically in their favour, that the monarch at length raised her, saying, "Madame, je n'oublierai pas la première faveur que vous me demandez." Far from assuming the haughty style of her predecessor, her manners were always simple, and unostentatious; her notes of invitation were usually terminated with these words, "Sa Majesté m'honorera de sa présence."

Nevertheless she participated in the disgraceful familiarities which Louis XV. authorised in his palace, and which he encouraged by his example. Her frankness and thoughtless gaiety greatly delighted the old monarch, whom she was in the habit of calling *La France*, and who frequently amused himself by watching the lively sports in which she joined with the young noblemen of the

court. On one occasion he entered her apartment unannounced, and found her playing blind-man's-buff with several of the courtiers, in the midst of whom was the Chancellor Maupeou in his robes, performing the part of *Colin Maillard*. It was by the instigation of this minister the parliament was exiled in 1771; and who also affixed the seals of the state upon the absurd brevet of Governor of Lucienne, which was given by Louis XV. to Madame Dubarri's little negro Zamor at one of her jovial suppers,—the ungrateful negro, whom it will be necessary to mention hereafter, under much more serious circumstances. Amongst other follies, one of the noblemen at court (the Duke de Tresme), who was deformed, and an object of the favourite's mirthful railleries, used to inscribe on his visiting cards, "Le sapajou de Madame la Comptesse." These familiarities were sometimes carried to excess; and Madame Dubarri one day thoughlessly seized a packet of sealed papers which lay on the king's escritoir, and in which she believed there was a letter written by Monsieur de Broglie in unfavourable terms of herself; the king endeavoured to take them from her, but she made him run several times round the council-chamber, and at length threw the packet of papers into the fire, when they were

immediately consumed. The irritated monarch pushed her out of the room without speaking, but the countess threw herself at his feet, and with tearful eyes entreated his forgiveness, which was readily accorded.

Although so playful and frolicsome within the palace, in public Madame Dubarri was extremely reserved, and at that epoch a reserved exterior was seldom to be seen, and, when found, was considered a great merit; in fact, "s'aimer sans plaisir, se livrer sans combat, se quitter sans regrets, traiter le devoir de faiblesse, l'honneur de préjugé, la delicatesse de fadeur; telles étaient les mœurs de ce temps, où la séduction avait son code, et où l'immoralité était réduite en principes."

The king conducted the Countess Dubarri to all the royal palaces successively, at each of which he gave superb entertainments in her honour, and the deference which was paid her frequently amounted to adulation. At the camp of Compiègne several regiments rendered her the military honours which are due only to princesses of the royal blood.

She did not suffer these flattering attentions and splendid recreations to interfere with her duty to her mother, who lived in retirement in the convent of Saint Elizabeth, at Paris, under the name of the Marchioness de Montrable, to whom she furnished

the means of supporting this borrowed title, and visited regularly twice every month.

Her influence and power excited the envy of several ladies at court,—amongst others, the Duchess de Grammont, sister to the Duke de Choiseul, prime minister of France, who was for some time on very friendly terms with the countess. The duchess excited the Duke de Choiseul against the favourite, and induced him to endeavour to persuade the king to dismiss her; so that, notwithstanding her dislike to business and politics, she was obliged in self-defence to give her attention to them, and, sustained by the Chancellor Maupeou and the Duke d'Aiguillon, as well as her own influence with the king, she succeeded in causing the duke to be exiled to Chantaloupe—Louis believing that he not only attempted to interfere with his domestic comfort, but also that he was endeavouring to create a war with England. Having however no revengeful feelings, and being an enemy to every kind of dispute, she soon after permitted him to return to Versailles at the solicitation of the Duchess de Grammont, but on condition that he should not appear at court. The Duke de Choiseul himself renders justice to Madame Dubarri in his Memoirs, by remarking that "cette

femme n'était pas faite pour connaître l'excès de la haine."

The Countess Dubarri had nevertheless one ambition, which was to procure the dissolution of her marriage at Rome, hoping, like Madame de Maintenon, to be solemnly united in marriage to Louis XV; her chances of success were more numerous than that lady's, Madame Dubarri being still young as well as beautiful; but she was a stranger to intrigue, without which it was impossible to obtain an object so difficult. Her hopes in that respect were repeated to the royal family, whose dislike to her naturally increased in consequence. She also had the imprudence to declare in presence of the dauphine that none but Frenchwomen possessed graceful manners; and that princess could not pardon so great a breach of politeness. Nevertheless, by her beauty and amiable manners she maintained her empire over the monarch and her influence at court, until Louis XV. was attacked with the small-pox, when, finding his last hour approach, and wishing to avoid a repetition of the occurrences which took place at Metz at the dismissal of the Duchess de Châteauroux, the dying king especially recommended his favourite to the care of

the Duchess d'Aiguillon, and begged her to withdraw her from that afflicting spectacle; but Madame Dubarri entreated permission to remain.

A few hours before Louis XV. expired, the Duchess d'Aiguillon separated the countess from her royal benefactor, and accompanied her to the château of Ruel, where she was informed of the king's death, which occurred in the year 1774. It was in this residence that the Duke de la Vrillière presented her the *lettre-de-cachet* which exiled her to the Abbey of Pont-aux-Dames near Meaux. This letter, which was sent her by Louis XVI., allowed her but one attendant, and all her correspondence was subjected to the scrutiny of the abbess of the convent. Confined to the monastery, Madame Dubarri neither murmured herself nor gave any cause of complaint to her companions, being there, as when at court, amiable and gentle to all; but the monotony of the cloister attacked her temperament and personal appearance. She was treated during the early part of the reign of Louis XVI. with a degree of rigour which was highly disrespectful to the memory of the late king, but she nevertheless entertained the same sincere attachment and fidelity for the august family which tyrannised

over her in so contemptible a manner, when decency at least required that she should remain uninjured.

At length, in 1776, Louis XVI., admiring her resignation, permitted her to leave her retreat and occupy her estate of Lucienne; and the pleasure of being restored to her friends and the world renewed her health. Her most intimate associates were Madame Mortemarte and Madame d'Angivilliers, the painter Lebrun, and the Duke d'Aiguillon. The Emperor Joseph II., during his visit to Paris, went to visit her at Lucienne, and when walking in the gardens offered her his arm, which she hesitated to accept; the emperor insisted, courteously adding, "La beauté, madame, est toujours reine." In her retreat of Lucienne, Madame Dubarri was universally beloved by her neighbours of all classes: accompanied by her young friend the Duke of Cossé Brissac, son of the Governor of Paris, she delighted in performing acts of charity to the poor inhabitants of the surrounding hamlets.

In 1790 France was in revolution, and the countess's resources were in consequence very much weakened; she was therefore obliged to sell a great quantity of her plate and jewels. One night three men in military dresses entered her apartment and boldly

demanded her treasures; terrified, and forbidden on pain of death to summon assistance, she gave them a jewel-case containing valuables to the amount of four hundred thousand francs, and a purse containing five hundred double louis-d'ors. This misfortune, however, might have been a means of safety by which Madame Dubarri could have escaped her destiny, for the theft had been extensively advertised, and the London papers soon afterwards announced that the authors of it had been discovered and arrested in that city. She accordingly repaired to England in order to acknowledge and claim her diamonds, and while in London kindly received and befriended several of the *gardes-du-corps* who were wounded in the royal cause on the 5th and 6th of October, and who had been obliged to fly from France, and even many emigrants who had been her greatest enemies during her days of triumph.

She would have done well had she remained in that peaceable country, but her affection for the Duke de Brissac, and her wish to assist and console the faithful royalists, induced her to return to France, in opposition to the advice of Pitt, who was then in the English ministry.

She enjoyed but a few bright days of security

after her return to Lucienne, and those were spent in kind attentions to the *gardes-du-corps* who escaped the massacres; she gave them an assylum, and paid them unceasing attentions, so that the queen warmly expressed her thanks. It was on that occasion that Madame Dubarri addressed the respectful and affecting letter to Marie Antoinette, in which with equal delicacy and generosity she offered her all that she possessed, not as a gift, but as a restitution. "Ces jeunes blessés," she wrote, "n'ont d'autres regrets que de n'être point morts pour une princesse aussi digne de tous les hommages que l'est votre majesté. Ce que je fais pour ces braves est bien au-dessous de ce qu'ils meritent. Je les console, et je respecte leurs blessures quand je songe, madame, que sans leur dévouement votre majesté n'existerait peut-être plus! Lucienne est à vous, madame: n'est pas votre bienveillance qui me l'a rendu? Tout ce que je possède me vient de la famille royale; j'ai trop de reconnaîssance pour l'oublier jamais. Le feu roi, par une sorte de pressentiment, me força d'accepter mille objets précieux avant de m'eloigner de sa personne; j'ai eu l'honneur de vous offrir ce trésor du temps des notables; je vous l'offre encore, madame, avec empressement. Vous avez tant de dépenses à sou-

tenir, et de bienfaits sans nombre à répandre! Permettez, je vous en conjure, que je rende à César ce qu'est à César."

The queen did not accept her offer, but she was sensibly affected by it, as also at the extreme delicacy with which it was made, and at the care the countess bestowed on those who were wounded and sacrificed for her own safety and that of her royal husband.

The revolution rapidly advanced, the whole kingdom was in a state of anarchy, and Madame Dubarri became an object of suspicion to the committee of Marly, among the members of which were an Irishman named Grieve, who coveted her estate of Lucienne, her negro Zamor, whom she had so long protected and cherished, and some other domestics not less ungrateful. Twice she was arrested by order of Grieve, and twice pronounced innocent by the Convention, upon a memorial signed by the greater number of the citizens of Marly and Lucienne, and by the interference of the chief magistrate of Lucienne and Goujon.

The charm of Madame Dubarri's last days consisted in solacing the unfortunate. She was the only consolation of Auguste de Rohan-Chabot, who

wrote to her from prison, "Il n'est plus de bonheur qu'avec vous; venez voir un mortel qui vous aimera jusqu'à la fin de sa vie. Je baise mille fois le portrait de la plus charmante femme qu'il y ait au monde, et dont le cœur si noble et si bon mérite un attachement éternel."

One night, Maussobré, the Duke de Brissac's aide-de-camp, arrived at Lucienne in great distress, and informed the Countess Dubarri that the king's troops were disbanded, and the duke arrested. She had hardly time to conceal the aide-de-camp before a loud noise was heard, a detachment of Marseillais penetrated into her dwelling, and, after having become intoxicated in her cellars, ransacked the house, and discovered the secret door which conducted to Maussobré's asylum, from which they drew and pitilessly manacled him. In the mean time other ruffians arrived, and one of them presented Madame Dubarri with the head of the unfortunate Duke de Brissac, who had been assassinated at Versailles. At the sight of it she fell down senseless. The young commander had both time and opportunity to escape, but, instead of profiting by them, he employed those precious moments in writing an affectionate letter to the countess, and in making his will, in which he bequeathed

her a part of the fortune he inherited from his father.

Grieve seized all her papers, and she was conveyed to the same chamber that had been occupied by the queen in the Conciergerie, where, loaded with irons, and awaiting her own destiny, she had the last melancholy consolation of learning that Lavallerie, the chief magistrate of Versailles, had precipitated himself into the Seine, from the despair of not having had it in his power to save her. When taken before the Revolutionary Tribunal, she offered to give up all her wealth; but Grieve and Zamor, who had taken possession of the château at Lucienne, declared that she corresponded with several emigrants; that they had found the portraits of Louis XV., the regent, and Anne of Austria in her possession, and moreover that the English minister Pitt was interested in her.

During her trial, in which she was sustained by the presence of her courageous advocate Chaveau-Lagarde, she replied to the interrogatories of the president Dumas with precision and coolness. After summing up the evidence, the president concluded with these words: "La conspiratrice qui est devant vous pouvait, au sein de l'opulence acquise par ses charmes, vivre heureuse dans une

patrie où était enseveli avec son amant le souvenir de sa prostitution ; mais la liberté du peuple était un malheur à ses yeux ; it fallait qu'elle fût toujours esclave, et qu'elle rampât encore sous des maîtres."

Convicted of corresponding with the enemies of the republic, she was condemned to death, and her goods declared to be the property of the nation, in 1793. On hearing her doom pronounced, she fainted, and was carried to her prison in a state of insensibility.

Although encouraged by the exhortations and example of several of her companions in misfortune, the countess uttered such lamentable cries, that the officers were obliged to quicken the speed of the vehicle which conveyed the condemned party, lest her piteous exclamations should excite the compassion of the people. At the last moment her senses appeared to forsake her; she entreated the executioner for a little delay in a supplicating tone; but he seized her by her arms, forcibly inclined her head, and, before the unhappy countess could invoke the Supreme pity, it rolled on the scaffold.

Thus did this celebrated favourite expiate her ephemeral prosperity, and her faults, which were of a nature to render her name odious, but which in all probability would never have been committed

had she possessed one friend to preserve her from the temptations which beset the path of her youth.

The Count d'Allonville, who saw her after the death of Louis XV., remarks, in his '*Mémoires Secrets*,' that, prejudiced against her, his first motive for visiting her was curiosity, but that interest soon succeeded to it; that on examination he could not reconcile that which he had heard of her and that which her countenance announced; there was no trace of her former condition or mode of life in the decency of her tone or the nobleness and refinement of her manners and deportment, which were equally free from pride and humility, licence and prudery, and that the sight of her alone almost refuted all that had been published against her.

It is to be regretted that Madame Dubarri's courage failed her in her last moments, at the period when so many victims of her own sex so eminently distinguished themselves. But this weakness would not perhaps have been so remarkable, had it not been for the astonishing heroism of the Frenchwomen at this disastrous epoch.

Before she became acquainted with Louis XV. she had one daughter, to whom she gave a dower of a hundred thousand francs, and married her to a

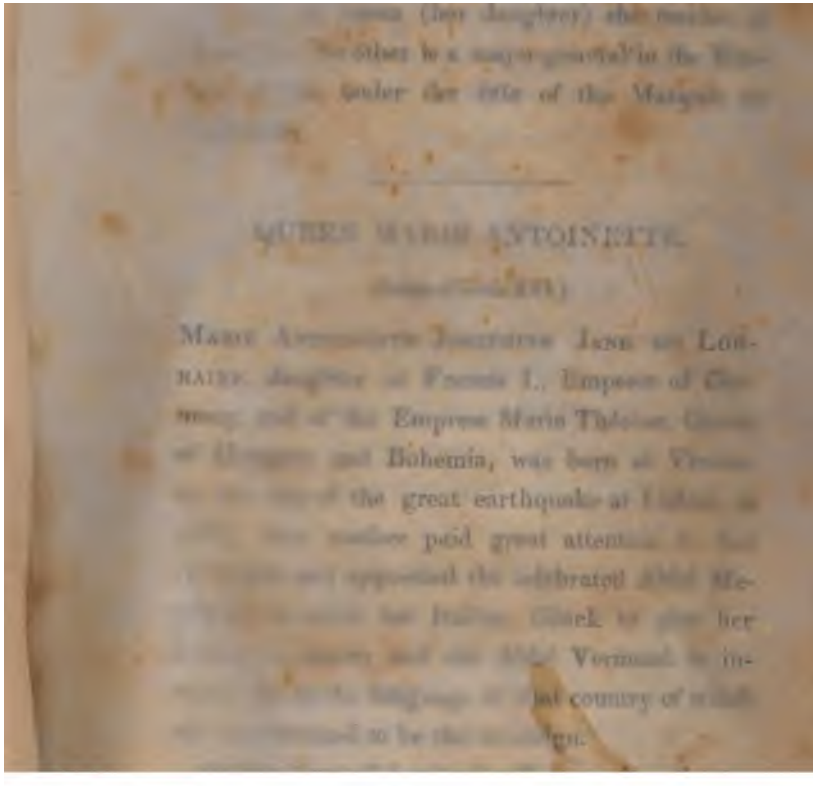
gentleman who possessed neither wealth nor noble birth. This lady is the mother of two children, with one of whom (her daughter) she resides at Münich; the other is a major-general in the Russian service, under the title of the Marquis de Boissason.

QUEEN MARIE ANTOINETTE.

(Reign of Louis XVI.)

MARIE ANTOINETTE JOSEPHINE JANE DE LORRAINE, daughter of Francis I., Emperor of Germany, and of the Empress Marie Thérèse, Queen of Hungary and Bohemia, was born at Vienna, on the day of the great earthquake at Lisbon, in 1755. Her mother paid great attention to her education, and appointed the celebrated Abbé Metastasio to teach her Italian, Gluck to give her lessons in music, and the Abbé Vermond to instruct her in the language of that country of which she was destined to be the sovereign.

At the time of her husband's accession, the revolution was preparing. Louis XVI., who was a liberal, and a partisan of reasonable reform, endeavoured to ameliorate the condition of the people; but their movements were too rapid. Ambition



Marie Antoinette

reigned in all hearts and anarchy in all heads; they had no guides but their momentary interests and disorderly passions, and were totally blind to events which were equally near and disastrous. The finances, which had been exhausted by the pomp of Louis XIV. and the culpable extravagance of Louis XV., were a sore which could be healed only by sacrifices on the part of the nobility and clergy; but these sacrifices were not made, and the monarchy was overturned. In vain Louis XVI. endeavoured to improve the condition of his unfortunate inheritance by imposing domestic privations on himself and his family; his single efforts were insufficient, and they were not seconded. One of his relations, whose susceptibility the monarch had involuntarily wounded, and an eloquent and ambitious orator, disseminated destructive principles throughout a nation then but indifferently enlightened, and consequently credulous, as well as eager after novelty. These were the principal causes of that impetuous movement which carried all before it amidst bloodshed and ruin, but which eventually produced great men and great events. It was to occupy this difficult position that Marie Antoinette renounced the peaceful palace of her fathers, when Choiseul, prime minister of France,

wishing to consolidate the peace between France and Germany, and, above all, to secure to himself the favour of the approaching reign, conceived the project of uniting the grandson of Louis XV. to the daughter of the illustrious Marie Thérèse. Nevertheless there were many in France who objected to an alliance with the house of Austria, and the Princess Adelaide strongly opposed the union of her nephew with the archduchess; but the views of the minister having prevailed, the young princess was asked in marriage by the Duke de Rohan, in the name of the dauphin.

In 1770, at the age of fifteen, Marie Antoinette was conducted to Kehl, where she was met by the dignitaries who were charged to receive her, as also the Duchesses de Cossé and de Noailles, ladies of honour. Louis XV. proceeded with a brilliant cortège to Compiègne, where the young dauphin and his affianced wife first met. The marriage was celebrated in the chapel of Versailles, and Louis XV. gave the dauphine many rich presents, among others the necklace of large pearls that Anne of Austria bequeathed to the Queens of France. Preparations were made for magnificent fêtes in Paris, but a sinister omen plunged the royal family into great consternation, in conse-

quence of the scaffolding which was erected for the purpose of the fireworks having taken fire. This event threw great confusion into the immense crowd that was assembled on the occasion, who, terrified, and pressed by the carriages that had no egress, were precipitated into the issues of the Place Louis XV., which had been left uncovered in the Rue Royale, when three hundred persons were either trodden under foot or suffocated.

The dauphin and his bride, who arrived from Versailles gay and happy at the time the catastrophe occurred, were sensibly afflicted by it, and could find no consolation for this disastrous event but in personally conveying succour to the wounded and dying. It was in the performance of these kindly actions that the young dauphine first made herself the object of universal idolatry. Foreigners as well as Frenchmen have rendered her sincere and just homage, although some of the elder courtiers, enemies of Austria, and the dauphin's aunts especially, spied and criticised her actions with much acrimony. The celebrated Burke, in speaking of her, thus expresses himself: "It is now sixteen or eighteen years since I saw the Queen of France (then dauphine) at Versailles; a more celestial apparition never shone on this orbit, which she

scarcely appeared to touch. She glittered like the morning star, full of life, brilliancy, and happiness." Sir William Wraxall also, in speaking of this princess, said, "In the summer of 1776, when I left France, Marie Antoinette had attained the highest degree of her beauty and prosperity. Her eulogium was in every mouth, from the courtier to the shopkeeper, and La Harpe did but echo the public voice, when he composed her portrait in the following verses :—

" ' Le ciel met dans ses traits cet éclat qu'on admire.
France, il la couronna pour ta felicité.
Un sceptre est inutile avec tant de beauté,
Mais à tant de vertus il fallait un empire.' "

One of her first acts as queen, in 1774, exhibited the natural generosity of her disposition. Monsieur de Pontecoulant, major of the gardes-du-corps, had previously given her some offence, and consequently, on the accession of Louis XVI., considered it necessary to tender his resignation; but Marie Antoinette obliged him to withdraw it, saying, "La reine ne se souvient des querelles de la dauphine, et c'est moi qui prie Monsieur de Pontecoulant de ne plus songer à ce que j'ai oublié." She also generously renounced a tax which had been paid by the nation on the accession of each queen,

from time immemorial, and known under the name of the *Ceinture de la Reine*; after which the poets said with truth, that, possessed of the girdle of Venus, any other was unnecessary.

Marie Antoinette was not decidedly beautiful when her features were examined separately; her attractions consisted in the expression of the ensemble, in the elegance of her form, the brilliancy of her complexion, the lightness of her step, the dignity of her deportment, and the grace which accompanied her smallest movements. Her hair was light, her eyes blue, her nose aquiline, and her mouth small; but the lower lip was prominent,—a fault which was characteristic of the princes of her family. She was not possessed of much talent, nevertheless she charmed those with whom she conversed, because the purity of her thoughts furnished her with appropriate expressions.

She could not endure flattery, and would never listen to scandal, for she considered it a duty to forget injuries, and an enjoyment to do good. Naturally simple, Marie Antoinette did not like the artificial manners of the court. She called Madame de Noailles, her dame d'honneur, *Madame l'Etiquette.* "Nous aimons," says a contemporary writer, "la voir tantôt se promener

à Marly, au lever de l'aurore, avec le jeune Duc de Chartres; tantôt allant à l'opéra en fiacre; une autre fois respirant l'air frais de la nuit, et daignant causer sous le voile de l'incognito avec un commis de la guerre." But the queen was surrounded with secret enemies, who blamed her for not preserving a more dignified exterior and submitting to the exigences of her rank. Doubtless the simplicity of her taste was praiseworthy, but, exposed to the bitter remarks and criticisms of the court, she should not have discarded the customs of the royal residence.

After her accession to the throne, she founded an hospital for the aged and poor at Versailles, and, in 1778, another for poor lying-in women, although she received only four hundred thousand francs a year, the same as Louis XIV.'s wife; but the value of money had greatly decreased since the time of Marie Thérèse. Among other acts of Marie Antoinette's benevolence, history mentions the erection of twelve cottages at Versailles, in which she placed twelve poor families, whom she supported and frequently visited.

In 1778, after a marriage of eight years, the queen gave birth to Madame Royale, who afterwards married the son of Charles X.; but she had hardly tasted of maternal joy when she lost her mo-

ther the illustrious Marie Thérèse, and was so much afflicted at the event, that she was attacked with a serious illness, which confined her to her apartment for some time. The birth of the dauphin, which occurred in 1781, consoled her for the loss of her parent, and from that time she became interested in political affairs, and exercised her influence over the king and her brother the emperor Joseph II., to prevent a war from breaking out between France and Austria.

None rejoiced more cordially in the glory which France, in the opinion of her people, acquired by the American war, than Marie Antoinette; those who had distinguished themselves were nobly received and warmly welcomed by her; amongst others, Lafayette and Lameth, one of whom was indebted to her for a wealthy marriage and the other for the commission of a general officer.

The queen has, however, been severely reproached because her circle of acquaintance was too circumscribed; she had chosen an intimate society in which all wished to join, and jealousy and hatred was the consequence. The good Marie Leckzinsky had also her circle of acquaintance, amongst whom were the Count de Tessan, the President Hainault, and some other persons of talent, and none ventured to find

fault with her; but that neglected queen lived in a time when the sovereign and court were spoken of with timid respect, and that time no longer existed. Marie Antoinette was on terms of close intimacy with the Princess de Lamballe, and the Duchess de Polignac, whose husband annually received two hundred and ninety-two thousand francs from the treasury of the state, although it was so much involved. With these friends the queen amused herself by giving domestic fêtes, sledge-racing, evening concerts, family excursions to balls and the opera, and private theatricals in which the noblemen and ladies of the court performed. Malevolence misconstrued these diversions, and gave a false colouring to amusements which were perfectly innocent; her enemies declared that her dislike to etiquette arose from a wish to veil her conduct, which she feared to expose. Perhaps during the early part of her marriage she did not display much warmth of affection for Louis XVI., who devoted most of his time to the education of his children, the chace, and mechanical works; but maternal love and friendship filled the heart of Marie Antoinette, and, notwithstanding the many insinuations that have been circulated against her by her numerous calumniators, there is no foundation for one of them.

By her marriage contract she was to have a private establishment of her own, as many of the Queens of France had before her, especially Catherine and Marie de Medicis, who built and resided, the former in the Tuileries, and the latter in the Luxembourg. To provide Marie Antoinette with a palace of her own, five million francs were given for the estate of Saint Cloud; and if this acquisition was a fault, considering the condition of the finances, it must be imputed to the minister Colonne, who deceived her in respect of the resources of the treasury. Her extravagances have been spoken of by her enemies, but none about her were more simply attired; and the charge of her having sent money to her family is equally absurd, because their finances were in a much more flourishing condition than those of France. Her habits were far from luxurious; she was never known to gamble, and seldom made any acquisitions of furniture or equipages.

One of the accusations brought against her at the Revolutionary Tribunal was, that at Trianon her bed was composed of white damask satin, which had been formerly occupied by Madame Dubarri, and was, moreover, very antiquated. Such is the testimony of those who were near the queen's person and had opportunities of witnessing her actions;

but the general mind was hostile to her, she was accused of too great an attachment to Austria, and reproached for the treaty which was signed in 1785 between Joseph II. and the United States, through the mediation of France, which agreed to pay the emperor four millions and a half of florins, with the view of avoiding a general war. The people were witness of the amount sent, but malevolence doubled the sum.

Another unfortunate circumstance occurred to lend arms to malignity; and the episode of the diamond necklace, which was a notorious fraud effected in the queen's name, augmented the number of her enemies. This event, which proved so fruitful in its results, was the effect of an intriguing woman's baseness, the underhand dealings of some persons who were near the throne, the shortsightedness of the court, and, above all, the inconceivable prejudices which the people entertained against a princess endowed with qualities which would have rendered her an object of love, had they been appreciated.

Boehmer and Bassange, the jewellers of the crown, after having collected a great number of very valuable diamonds, composed a necklace the worth of which was enormous: in 1785 they offered it to the queen for the sum of sixteen hundred thousand

francs ; she expressed her admiration of its beauty, but unhesitatingly replied that she would rather that the king armed two vessels of the line with that amount than spend it on the necklace ; it being the epoch in which America was struggling for her independence.

The Cardinal Prince de Rohan, who entertained culpable sentiments for Marie Antoinette, had displeased her by a correspondence in which he had treated the empress Marie Thérèse with disrespect, and, wishing to recover the queen's favour, had the imprudence to confide the secret of his passion to the wife of one of the gardes-du-corps named Lamotte, who pretended to have been descended from the family of Valois. This woman was the daughter of a man who was plunged in vice as well as misery from the effects of his profligate habits, and had been dismissed from a corps of gendarmes to which he belonged for having negotiated false letters of exchange. In order to dupe the cardinal, Madame Lamotte flattered his pride, persuaded him that she had private interviews with the queen on secret affairs, and informed him that the queen was desirous of procuring the necklace without the king's knowledge. The cardinal seized the occasion of performing the queen a service by

secretly procuring an object worthy of her, and negotiated the affair with Boehmer. He accordingly presented the jeweller with a document containing a promise of partial payment at stated periods, which the queen was to procure by economies on her own annuity, and which promissory-note was given him by Madame Lamotte, and signed *Marie Antoinette* by an accomplice of that lady named Retaux de Villette. The valuable necklace was therefore deposited in the hands of the prelate, who commissioned his confidante to convey it to the queen, whom she pretended to have frequent interviews with, and promised, on receiving it, to procure one for him. The necklace had no sooner fallen into her hands than this perfidious woman broke it, and sent her husband to England with the diamonds, for which he obtained a considerable sum of money. A short time after Madame Lamotte, who was born in indigence, and possessed nothing, astonished her acquaintance by her luxury and extravagance.

In the mean time the Cardinal de Rohan expected to be recompensed with the promised interview for his services in the affair, and Madame Lamotte was therefore obliged to continue the intrigue. The queen was frequently in the habit of taking evening

walks, and giving fêtes champêtres in the gardens of Trianon, which were illuminated on those occasions, and was always accompanied by those persons whom she honoured with her intimacy. At one of these evening diversions Madame Lamotte placed a young lady named Oliva in an obscure grove, and promised her fifteen thousand francs if she would personate the queen; she then announced to the cardinal in a mysterious manner that her majesty would grant him an interview, and that on this first occasion would only present him her hand. The delighted cardinal suffered himself to be conducted to an isolated part of the gardens, where a closely veiled woman presented her hand to him with dignity; the prelate kissed it with transport, when she made a sign for him to retire, after pronouncing these words in a low tone of voice: "Vous pouvez espérer que le passé sera oublié."

Nevertheless the favours with which the cardinal had been decoyed were not renewed, and he was consuming himself with vain hopes, when the time for the dénouement of this deplorable intrigue arrived; the term assigned for the payment of the necklace having passed unnoticed, the jewellers sent a memorial to Marie Antoinette supplicating for a part of the money. The asto-

nished queen instantly commanded their presence, and they assisted in explaining the odious plot. She immediately repaired to the king's apartment, and demanded justice for the injury that had been done her by Cardinal de Rohan. This prelate had just concluded his daily functions as grand almoner at Versailles, and was still clad in his pontifical robes, when summoned before the monarch. The queen challenged him to speak the truth with just and energetic indignation: "Monsieur le Cardinal," she said, "mettez la main sur la conscience, et dites si ce n'est pas depuis quatre ans la première fois que je vous parle?" Summoned to reply, the cardinal avowed his error, and tremblingly declared how he had been deceived by the Countess Lamotte-Valois. He was immediately arrested and conveyed to the Bastille, but before his papers were secured he had sufficient time to give orders in German to his Hungarian valet to burn several, which he designated to him. Madame Lamotte avowed her crime, and the parliament acquitted the cardinal in 1786: Retaux de Villette was condemned to banishment; Lamotte to the gallows; and his wife to be scourged, branded with a hot iron, and to spend the remainder of her days in solitary imprisonment.

This event did not in the least diminish the confidence which Louis XVI. had in his wife, but it left profound and serious traces on the public mind, under the political circumstances in which France was at that time placed. All Europe was interested in the miserable affair, though the innocence of the queen was not for a moment doubted by upright individuals; and that which appears really inconceivable in this swindling transaction is, that, after the authors of it were found guilty by their own avowal as well as by the fruits of their theft, it should have been still considered necessary to exculpate the queen from an accusation the nature of which alone rendered it quite absurd: but the affair of the diamond necklace was for Marie Antoinette one of those inevitable fatalities which accompanied her from misfortune to misfortune, until her last moment.

After this unfortunate event the queen, who was surrounded with enemies, and basely persecuted by an ambitious faction, lost so much respect and consideration, that a woman well bred, but not noble, to whom Marie Antoinette inconsiderately applied for some information relative to a course of suppers she was giving, presumed to invite her to join them. It was doubtless an act arising from deplorable ignorance, but a party took notice of the circumstance

for the purpose of auguring the most injurious suspicions against the innocent queen, whose momentary thoughtlessness drew on her this insolent proposition.

In 1789 the queen received some marks of public homage on the opening of the States General, but the voices that were friendly to her were soon drowned by indignities and menaces which wounded her pride without destroying her courage.

The report of her injuries resounded throughout Europe, and the Queen of Naples, and her brother the Emperor Joseph II., entreated her to escape from the dangers which they foresaw. Though many of her courtiers had already emigrated, Marie Antoinette would not follow their example, but steadfastly refused to quit the king, and decided on fulfilling her duties of wife and mother, however serious the result. In one of her letters to her brother, Joseph II., she remarked that "a good and fond mother" (which she herself was in an eminent degree) "has no country but the one in which the fate of her children is necessarily fixed."

In the midst of the political agitations of the year 1789 she lost the dauphin; the death of the Princess Sophie Héléne in 1787 had already decreased the number of her children. Her afflic-

tions were also augmented by the departure of her friend the Duchess de Polignac. This lady was elegant in manners, modest in deportment, and of excellent reputation. Her numerous charms interested the queen, who became fondly attached to her, and this friendship between two women worthy of one another ended but with death. Their affection was increased by the duchess having accepted the place of governess to the royal children, which charge she executed with the utmost confidence. Her house was in a manner the queen's house, for it was there that that august princess's circle of friends were most frequently in the habit of associating.

A favourite is always considered a political enemy, and Madame de Polignac, like her friend, was calumniated; moreover, she was accused of having too great an influence over political affairs and the nomination of appointments. After the insurrection of the 14th of July, in which Polignac and Sombreuil had been insulted and attacked in the gardens of the Palais Royal by the multitude, and had succeeded in putting several to flight, the queen trembled for her friend, who was personally designated for the poignards of the assassins, and whom she expected the king would be called upon to give up to their revolutionary judgment.

She therefore sent for the duchess on the day following, and entreated her to fly during the night. Madame de Polignac obstinately refused to do so, declaring that she would share the fate of Marie Antoinette, who, shedding torrents of tears, said to her, "To-morrow the king goes to Paris, and if they ask him! ... I have everything to dread for you! ... In the name of friendship, fly while there is yet time! Remember that you are a mother:" and the king having entered at the moment, she added, "Come, Sire, assist me in persuading my faithful friends that they must leave us."

The king seized the hand of the duke, who had accompanied his wife, and said, "Yes, follow the queen's counsel: it must be so; I beg it of you, and, if it is necessary, I command you." They accordingly obeyed, and at midnight, when the Duchess de Polignac was ready for her departure, she received the following short note from the queen: "Adieu, la plus tendre des amies. ... Que ce mot est affreux! mais il est nécessaire. ... Adieu! je n'ai que la force de vous embrasser." Thus was dissolved the most tender and pure of habitual connections, which had existed for the space of fifteen years.

The court became melancholy and silent, and

Marie Antoinette's hair whitened with the effects of fear and sorrow; nevertheless, adversity gave her prudence, but never diminished her courage. To increase the evils, scarcity arrived, and that was also attributed to the monarch.

The queen, whose only pleasure consisted in her correspondence with her brother, Joseph II., and the Duchess de Polignac, lost even that gratification, for she was too closely watched to be enabled any longer to communicate with her friend, and death robbed her of the emperor. The only devoted friend that remained to her was the good and beautiful Princess de Lamballe, who left Aix-la-Chapelle to console Marie Antoinette for the absence of her other exiled favourite. In vain those who were attached to her threw themselves on their knees and endeavoured to dissuade her from going to Versailles. "La reine me désire," she replied; "je dois vivre et mourir près d'elle." The atrocious details of the assassination of this devoted and noble princess are too well known.

The revolution ripened rapidly, and the royal residence was menaced by an immense number of intoxicated men and women armed with pikes, who assembled at Paris, and proceeded to attack Versailles. General Lafayette followed them at

the head of eight thousand men of the National Guard, but appeared too late to paralyse the efforts of the assassins, who had already taken possession of the courts of the château. Enclosed in their palace with a small number of faithful servants, the royal family were for ten hours defended by the courage of the gardes-du-corps, who patiently endured injuries and blows which the king forbade them to return. The rioters soon found their way into the palace, loudly demanding the head of the Austrian. Two of the gardes-du-corps, named Du Repaire and De Miomandre, defended the door of the queen's chamber, and by their courageous and prolonged resistance gave her time to take refuge in the king's apartment. At length the unhappy Louis XVI., seeing the extreme danger of his position, was desirous of sending his wife and children out of the country, but Marie Antoinette refused to abandon him.

In 1790 the royal family were forced to quit Versailles and proceed to Paris under an escort of upwards of thirty thousand individuals armed with swords, cutlasses, halberds, and even sticks; and during the journey, which lasted seven hours, they constantly held up on pikes before the queen's eyes the heads of the gardes-du-corps who had perished

in the service of her family; while intoxicated women, seated on cannons, with dishevelled hair and disordered dresses, sang obscene songs, and addressed insulting language to her. Marie Antoinette displayed much dignity and courage throughout this trying scene; she sat holding the dauphin on her knee, endeavouring to soothe his terrors, but without the power to give him the bread he asked for. Nevertheless, when the judges of the Châtelet interrogated her respecting the offences which were committed in her sight, she replied, "J'ai tout vu, et tout oublié."

Confined in the Tuileries as in a prison, the queen devoted herself to the education of her children, and endeavoured to strengthen those family ties which she foresaw would soon be broken. At length the king, who had lost all hope of preserving his throne, yielding to the wishes of his devoted friends, who had contrived a method of retreat, consented, in 1791, to quit France secretly, and seek an asylum for his unhappy family in some strange but more hospitable land. Accidental circumstances, however, and the treachery of perfidious servants, prevented the completion of their projects. The king and queen were stopped at Varennes and taken back prisoners to the Tuileries

after which they were incessantly guarded by their enemies. Marie Antoinette was not even free in her own chamber, the door of which she was not suffered to close, in order that all her movements within might be observed.

In this extremity, the queen, penetrated with the idea that a new species of government was requisite for a people so suddenly changed, and convinced that the royalists were more injurious than beneficial to their cause, judged that the only hope of salvation for her family was in the heads of the faction into whose hands the power had passed. In the mean time Mirabeau had addressed himself to the king's brother, who rejected his offer; he then applied directly to the king, who gave him a vague reply, but at length, at the queen's instigation, decided on meeting him at midnight at Saint Cloud, where Louis XVI. had permission to reside for a short period at the close of the year 1790.

Mirabeau, fearing a well-merited vengeance, hesitated at first to proceed to this rendezvous, which he had himself solicited; he however finally determined upon going, and, in order to cover the interview with an impenetrable veil, was accompanied only by his nephew Saillant, whom he left

in his cabriolet at one of the exterior gates, after regulating their watches, giving him a letter for the commandant of the Parisian national guard, and addressing him thus: "I am ignorant whether they intend to deal fairly by me or to assassinate me; if, therefore, I do not return in one hour, leave instantly with all speed, deliver this letter as addressed, cause the tocsin to be sounded, and announce the perfidy of the court to the people." The hour passed, and Saillant grew very uneasy about his uncle: he however waited a quarter of an hour longer, and then turned his horse's head slowly towards Paris, each moment stopping, looking, and listening: at length he heard himself called; it was by Mirabeau, who exclaimed, "I tremble from the fear that you had left!... I am content; all will go well. Preserve the most profound silence upon this step, which is most important to the salvation of the state." Had Saillant strictly obeyed his uncle, the popular rage would doubtless have caused the assassination of all the royal family that night. In this important interview the powerful Mirabeau agreed to take part in the monarchy, but unfortunately he died before he had fulfilled his engagement, and his premature death has given rise to a suspicion that he came by it unfairly.

After the death of Mirabeau, General Dumouriez was desirous of taking the helm of affairs, and even threw himself on his knees before the queen, entreating her to be guided by him, but she had not sufficient confidence in him.

In 1792 another violent insurrection broke out, in which the gates of the Tuileries were forced by a crowd of insulting murderers; some faithful servants placed the royal family behind a rampart of tables and benches, in front of which were ranged a few grenadiers of the battalion of the Filles Saint-Thomas, who turned aside the weapons of the assassins. They, however, went sufficiently near to the king's person to place a red cap with a tri-coloured cockade* on his head, and, as each moved past, the unhappy queen was obliged to hear gross and vulgar songs, and to endure the sight of indecent emblems which they held before her eyes. The unfortunate monarch and his family remained close prisoners in the Tuileries until the 10th of April in the same year; when, after the victory of the Marseillais, they were led over the

* During the revolutionary changes a *white* cockade was assumed by the partisans of the Count d'Artois; *red* was added by those of the Duke of Orleans; and when Louis XVI. was compelled to adopt those colours he affixed *blue* in honour of royalty; which combination was the origin of the tri-coloured cockade.—ALLONVILLE.

bleeding corpses of their last faithful servants, and quitted their ransacked palace never more to re-enter it.

Conducted to the Legislative Assembly to be interrogated and hear their sentence pronounced, the royal family were present three successive days at these painful debates, never leaving the logographers' box, in which they were confined, before night. Transferred from thence to the tower of the Temple, the last residence of Louis XVI., Marie Antoinette was once more tormented in her captivity by constant spies. Clery, their one faithful domestic, was often indisposed, and at those periods the queen and Madame Elizabeth were obliged to make the beds for the family, perform the domestic duties, and on more than one occasion repair the only coat the king possessed, while he slept.

Almost deprived of air in their obscure prison, they sometimes descended into a closely walled garden, but in doing so were obliged to pass through the midst of a double hedge of guards, who purposely made indelicate remarks and blew tobacco-smoke in the faces of the princesses. At length, to debar the queen from this melancholy walk, they presented her with the head of Madame de Lamballe fixed on the end of a pike.

Confined to the sepulchral calm of their prison, the king and queen, still dignified in their chains, lightened their captivity by instructing their children and preparing their own minds for the approaching change which they felt convinced was inevitable. The details of the captive existence of these royal prisoners are equally afflicting and edifying, and afford that most useful of all instruction, the knowledge of how to die. It has been remarked by a contemporary, who had several opportunities of judging, that "Louis XVI. sur la trône fut un bon roi; mais Louis XVI. captif fut sublime."

While united the unhappy family endured their sufferings more calmly by sharing them; but this consolation was not long allowed them, for the king was transferred to another chamber, and never again suffered to see the beloved partakers of his sorrows except to bid them an eternal adieu. The only communication they had was by writing in the night, and affixing the letters to a pincushion, which was lowered from the upper story window by a piece of thread; but this last resource was prohibited, and the commune ordered that they should be deprived of all means of communication or self-destruction, so that Madame Elizabeth, when repairing their clothes, was obliged to cut the thread with her teeth.

The 21st of January, 1793, put a term to the misfortunes of Louis XVI., who obtained permission to see his wife and children, when he tenderly and affectionately bade them farewell. His place of execution was the Place Louis XV., between the Tuileries and the Champs Elysées, which was chosen in remembrance of the misfortune which occurred there on the day of his marriage. He took off his coat himself, and his hands were immediately seized by the executioner: not prepared for that act of violence, he endeavoured to repulse him, but his good friend and confessor the Abbé Edgeworth prevented him with this remark: "Sire, this indignity is one more trait of resemblance between your Majesty and the Saviour, who will recompense your patience and long sufferings." Louis immediately offered his hands to be bound, and mounted the scaffold with a firm step; at the same moment the Abbé Edgeworth made this consoling exclamation: "*Fils de Saint Louis, montez au ciel.*" The king turned towards the people, and cried with a loud voice, "Français, je meurs innocent de tous les crimes qu'on m'a imputés. Je pardonne à mes ennemis, et je prie Dieu qu'il leur pardonne. Je souhaite que ma mort..." He could say no more, for the ferocious Santerre

ordered the drums to strike up for the purpose of drowning his voice, and the savage acclamations that followed informed the queen of the consummation of the regicide.

After the execution of the king, Marie Antoinette was separated from her family, and could not even obtain permission to visit her son when ill. The young prince was confided to the care of mercenary persons, who treated him with great brutality; and the queen, who declared that nothing but death should separate her from her son, was violently torn from him and conducted to the Conciergerie, where she awaited her judgment in a damp dungeon, and was guarded incessantly night and day by two gendarmes, from whom she was separated by a screen only.

In October, 1793, she was brought to trial, and during the debates, which lasted seventy-three hours, preserved all her dignity and coolness: her replies were simple, noble, and precise; but the victim was designed for the guillotine, and could not therefore be saved by either justice, compassion, or the courageous pleading of her defenders, Chaveau-Lagarde and Tronson de Coudray, who faithfully fulfilled their perilous office. Condemned to death on the 16th of October, 1793, by a unani-

mous vote, Marie Antoinette calmly listened to her doom, and preluded the execution of it by cutting off her hair. Dressed in white, with her hands bound, she was placed on the fatal cart in company with a priest and the executioner, and, while proceeding to the Place Louis XV., was subjected to the insults of the populace.

"This, madame," said the priest, "is the moment in which you must arm yourself with courage."

"Courage!" she replied: "I have been so long apprenticed to it, that there is little probability of its failing me at this moment." After casting her eyes mournfully towards the royal palace of the Tuileries, she mounted the scaffold with precipitation, and, kneeling down, said, "Lord, enlighten and soften the hearts of my executioners. Adieu for ever, my children; I go to rejoin your father." She then looked down proudly and calmly on the people who surrounded her, and the next moment her life and many sorrows were ended at the age of thirty-eight.

Her body, which was thrown into the same pit that contained her husband's, in the cemetery of the Madeline, was covered with quick lime, in order that her remains might be speedily consumed, but some of her bones, which were discovered in

1815, were transferred to the royal tomb of Saint Denis.

Marie Antoinette had four children—Marie Thérèse Charlotte, born in 1778, now Duchess d'Angoulême; the Dauphin Louis, who was born in 1781 and died in 1789; Charles Louis Duke of Normandy, born in 1785, and who, after the death of his father, was known, during his short existence, as Louis XVII.; and a daughter who died in her infancy.

QUEEN AND EMPRESS JOSEPHINE.

(Reign of Napoleon Bonaparte.)

Marie Rose Josephine Tascher de la Pagerie, daughter of a highly respectable family of Martinique, was born at Saint Pierre in that island in the year 1768, where she resided with her mother on the estate of her aunt Madame Renaudin, who entertained great affection for her, and devoted much attention to her education. At an early age she was united to the Viscount Alexandre de Beauharnais, then a major in the French army, and son of the Governor-general of the Carribean Islands, whose property adjoined that of Monsieur de Re-

naudin. The young officer had formed a previous attachment, but was obliged to yield to the wishes of his family, and, although Josephine loved him sincerely, gave her serious occasion for jealousy, which she at first complained of with gentleness, but, finding that, instead of changing his conduct, he publicly admitted his passion for the woman who was destroying her happiness, Madame de Beauharnais reproached him with bitterness, which served only to increase the distance between them.

On arriving at Paris, Josephine was presented at court, where her grace and amiability rendered her an object of interest and affection to many, but the estrangement that existed between herself and the viscount, added to the declining health of her mother, decided her to sacrifice the triumphs of self-love to filial affection, and accordingly in 1787 she returned to Martinique, and remained in that colony until the year 1791, when the insurrections that broke out there obliged her to return to the metropolis of France, which was not more peaceful.

The rank of general commanding in chief, which her husband had obtained, as well as that of a president of the *Assemblée Constituante*, gave Madame de Beauharnais considerable importance and influence, which she exerted towards assisting

many unfortunate persons, and saving many from the scaffold.

During the revolution, General Beauharnais embraced the new ideas which were disseminated with all the enthusiasm of an exalted imagination. He thought that liberty would be gained by obtaining some concessions from the king, whom he loved and venerated. Madame de Beauharnais' self-love was much flattered by the distinction her husband had attained; and the affection he manifested for his two children, Eugene and Hortense, almost revived her tenderness for him.

In 1793 the revolutionary excesses spared neither age, virtue, nor merit; and General Beauharnais, who had valiantly defended his country, was calumniated, arrested, and thrown into prison. When in this critical position, his wife, generously forgetting all his injustice towards her, paid him the most affectionate attentions, and made unceasing and heroic efforts to save him, by which she rendered herself an object of suspicion. The general was moved with a sense of gratitude and admiration at this noble conduct, and wrote her several most affecting letters in which he strongly recommended his children to her care. He deeply regretted his neglect of her, and made every effort to show how

sensible he was of her many admirable qualities; he also lamented the absence of his brother, who might have served as a guide to the wife he had so often offended; and he proved with sincerity that his last thoughts and affections were with her. Monsieur Francis de Beauharnais was in all respects worthy of the love of his brother, and, although they differed in political opinions, nothing could alter their attachment. Each pursued an opposite path with equal frankness, loyalty, and honour. The Viscount Francis de Beauharnais, brother-in-law of Josephine, was always devoted to her interest, and she preserved a regard for him which continued until her death.

In her turn, Madame de Beauharnais was put in the prison of the Madelonnettes, where she received the last letter of adieu from her husband, and heard the melancholy news of his death. This information, though expected, produced a terrible effect on her; she remained insensible for some time, and on recovering abandoned herself to the most violent transports of despair, which caused the delay of her own sentence.

In recounting the circumstances connected with her imprisonment to some of the devoted friends

who afterwards composed her court at Navarre, she frequently remarked that, notwithstanding all appearances and probabilities, she never suffered herself for a moment to entertain the idea that her execution would really take place, because she incessantly thought of a prediction which had been made to her by an old negress in Martinique previous to her marriage.

One day, when strolling through the fruit-walk of a coffee-plantation near Saint Pierre, she perceived several slaves assembled round an old woman who was renowned for telling fortunes. Mademoiselle Tascher stopped to listen, when, on perceiving her, the sorceress uttered a loud cry, took her hand, which she looked at attentively, and appeared to suffer from extreme agitation. Amused with her grimaces, she asked her if she observed anything in her face or hand which was extraordinary. The old negress replied that she did.

"Is it misfortune or happiness that awaits me?"

"Misfortune! .... oh, yes, and happiness also."

"You do not compromise yourself, my dear sibyl; your oracles are not distinct."

"I dare not render them more intelligible," said the woman, raising her eyes towards the sky with

a singular expression. Josephine's curiosity was excited, and she requested her to explain what she foresaw in her future destiny.

"What I foresee? You will not believe me if I speak."....

"Oh, I assure you I am most credulous; therefore, good mother, tell me what I have to fear, and what to hope?"

"You insist on it,—then listen. You will be married very soon, but your union will not be happy; you will become a widow, and then ..... then you will be *Queen of France;* you will pass some glorious and happy years, but you will perish in an insurrection." On pronouncing these words the woman burst through the circle that had gathered round her, and hastened away as fast as her enfeebled legs would permit. Mademoiselle Tascher forbad the negroes to ridicule the prediction of the old negress, but she nevertheless endeavoured to persuade them that it was highly absurd, and that she had no faith in it; and, after laughing over the adventure with her family, lost all recollection of it until the death of her husband, when she confessed that, by constantly thinking of it, all that had been predicted to her appeared far less absurd, and even possible.

A few mornings after the general's execution, the gaoler entered the room which was occupied by Madame de Beauharnais, the Duchess d'Aiguillon, and two other ladies, and informed the former that he was come to take the folding bedstead which she occupied, to give it to another prisoner. "To give it to another prisoner!" exclaimed Madame d'Aiguillon; "then I suppose Madame Beauharnais will have a better?"

"No, no," replied the man with an atrocious smile, "she will not require it; they are coming to fetch her from this to the Conciergerie, and from thence to the guillotine." At these words her companions uttered violent lamentations; Madame de Beauharnais endeavoured to console them, but, finding them inconsolable, told them that their grief was unreasonable, for that she should not only escape the guillotine, but should be *Queen of France.*

"Why do you not then at once appoint your court?" said Madame d'Aiguillon, almost angrily."

"Ah, truly, I did not think of it; but I will make you my *dame d'honneur,* I promise you." Perceiving so much sang froid in Madame de Beauharnais, the duchess and the two other ladies' tears fell still more abundantly, for they thought tha

she, like many other victims, had lost her reason. She assured them that she was perfectly conscious of the improbability of what she said, and that she was not assuming a false courage, but that she felt persuaded of the realisation of the oracle. Madame d'Aiguillon became suddenly faint, upon which Madame de Beauharnais drew her towards the window, which she opened that the air might revive her: while standing there they perceived a woman making signs to them which they did not understand. She constantly held the skirt of her dress and pointed towards it, till at length Madame de Beauharnais pronounced the word *robe*, upon which she signified that she was understood; she then picked up a stone and held it up in her hand, when the prisoner cried *pierre*. On being sure that her meaning was perceived her joy was extreme, and, holding the stone and a portion of her dress in the same hand, she gave them to understand by her gestures that *Robespierre's* head was cut off. This singular pantomine caused the captives great emotion, as they had every reason to believe that the tyrant Robespierre *was* dead. While in a state of anxiety between hope and fear, they were startled by a noise in the corridor, and a few moments after heard the voice of the formidable

gaoler, and beheld their companions in misfortune, who gave them the details of the event.

When empress, Josephine was desirous of keeping her word, and expressed a wish to have the Duchess d'Aiguillon (then the Countess Louis de Girardin) as her dame d'honneur; but the emperor refused, because she had been *divorced*. Some time after his severe notions abated, and Madame Girardin was appointed dame d'honneur to the Queen of Naples, while that country was governed by Joseph Bonaparte.

Upon the death of Robespierre, Tallien restored Madame de Beauharnais to liberty, which service she never forgot; and after Napoleon Bonaparte became first consul he gave a handsome pension to the intrepid citizen who delivered France from that odious tyrant. Josephine also undertook the charge of Mademoiselle Thermidor Tallien's education, and honoured her mother with her friendship.

Barras, the director of the Executive Assembly, obtained the restoration of a great part of General Beauharnais' fortune to his widow, and, by way of indemnity for that which had been disposed of, gave four hundred thousand francs for Malmaison, which he presented to her. After her accession to

the throne Josephine spent enormous sums in embellishing this residence, to which she was much attached.

After General Bonaparte had dispersed the different sections and parties in Paris, and seized their arms, Eugene de Beauharnais, who was then only fifteen years of age, presented himself to him, and boldly requested permission to wear his father's sword. Bonaparte admired his energy, which he publicly commended, and this circumstance strengthened the desire he had to see the widow of the celebrated General Beauharnais, who was living in retreat at Malmaison, assisting in the education of her children, and devoting much of her time to the study of botany, of which she was passionately fond.

He saw and became attached to her, but Madame de Beauharnais hesitated some time before she consented to marry him. Her first marriage having been unfortunate, she feared to enter upon a second; she also dreaded his ambitious character; but the young conqueror was assiduous in his attentions, and promised to bestow paternal affection upon her two children, so that she at length yielded to the solicitations of her family and friends, especially the director Barras,

and probably also the dictates of her own heart, and in 1796 became the wife of Napoleon Bonaparte, who frequently declared that she was the only woman he ever truly loved.

Josephine was by no means beautiful, but her manners and deportment were particularly graceful; there was a peculiar charm in her smile, and sweetness in her tones; she also dressed with an infinite degree of taste. When her husband was named general-in-chief of the army in Italy, and the young hero hastened to achieve the brilliant exploits which laid the foundation of his military reputation, Madame Bonaparte accompanied him, and was as much admired for her gentleness and goodness beyond the Alps as she had been in France.

At the commencement of her marriage, Josephine's sentiments of affection for Napoleon were not so strong as they were a little later. His letters to her prove how greatly he was enamoured of her, and how much he regretted that she did not manifest a more tender passion for him. His jealousy, which he carried to an extreme degree, manifested itself on all occasions, and was not relative to one man, but extended to all who visited Madame Bonaparte. In order to insure domestic peace, she was obliged to close her doors against her old

friends, whose society gave umbrage to her husband. She supported unjust suspicions and violent reproaches with a degree of patience and gentleness which entitled her to the most sincere and durable attachment of the man who, for a long time, refused to listen to his family and ministers, when uniting to persuade him to renounce her and contract an alliance with a sovereign princess.

When the conqueror of Italy carried his arms into Egypt, Josephine retired to Malmaison, where she continued her researches in her favourite study of botany, and built a very extensive hothouse, which she filled with a most rare and valuable collection of exotics. Her taste in this respect was so well known throughout Europe, that, although England and France were constantly at war, the Prince Regent of England gave orders that the envoys whom she employed to collect her horticultural treasures should be respected and pass securely.

When Bonaparte was promoted to the consulate Josephine profited by this new elevation to extend her benevolence; she became the depository of the sorrows of all who approached her, had the names of several unhappy French families erased from the list of emigrants, and acted in so maternal a

manner, that Napoleon, in one of his letters to her, wrote, "Si je gagne les batailles, c'est vous qui gagnez les cœurs." This great man acknowledged that the generous and amiable conduct of his wife assisted towards his elevation; and if Napoleon, who frequently listened to her useful advice, had heeded her supplications, the Duke d'Enghien might have continued his innocent career in exile, and himself have been spared the commission of a cruel murder, which tarnished his glory and plunged France in grief. But though Josephine deeply regretted that she had not succeeded in preventing that deplorable catastrophe, she also vindicated her husband. "The emperor was cruelly advised," she said: "such a project would never have entered his mind; but when the Duke was once arrested nothing could prevent his execution, from a fear the emperor entertained that he would be taxed with weakness; but I am sure he has more than once lamented having been too promptly obeyed. There are some things," she continued, "upon which I should be silent, that I might not expose the names of the true authors of the death of the Duke d'Enghien to infamy; but history will speak, and the truth will be known. It was for the most part *General Moreau* who was the cause of this

bloody transaction. I shall always detest those who urged him to the crime: *they have been his worst enemies.*"

On his return from Marengo, Napoleon gave the following prophetic felicitation to his happy wife: "Votre fils marche rapidement à la postérité ....il deviendra l'un des plus grands capitaines de l'Europe." A prediction which succeeding events fully justified.

Josephine was consecrated Empress of France by Pope Pius VII. (Chiaramonte), and Napoleon placed the iron crown upon her brow at Milan. A short time previously to the coronation, Cardinal Fesch pronounced the nuptial benediction upon the royal pair at night, in the chapel of the Tuileries, by direction of the sovereign pontiff, in presence of a small number of witnesses, amongst whom was Eugene de Beauharnais. Hitherto they had only been united according to the civil form of marriage, political circumstances having prevented the celebration of the religious ceremony.

When seated on the throne, and wearing the double diadem, surrounded by the love and glory of her illustrious husband, and cherished with affection by the French people, Josephine did not imagine that she would so soon have been required

to yield her place to a stranger. Her son, Prince Eugene, Viceroy of Italy, was married to a daughter of the King of Bavaria, upon which occasion magnificent fêtes were given at Munich, at which the emperor and empress were present; and her daughter Hortense was united to Louis Bonaparte King of Holland, by whom she had a son, who, unfortunately for Josephine, died in 1807; for Napoleon was excessively fond of his young nephew, whom it was said he intended to have named as his successor; and after the death of this prince, the report of the emperor's divorce began to be circulated at court.

In the apartment which the empress usually occupied at the Tuileries there was a door which communicated with the emperor's cabinet by a secret staircase, and when he wanted to consult Josephine he was in the habit of knocking at it himself, upon which signal she descended. After the divorce became a subject of consultation, each summons at that door caused her such violent agitation that she could with difficulty respire, and on more than one occasion she fainted from the fear of hearing the confirmation of the separation she so much dreaded. At length the Senate confirmed the dissolution of the marriage, in 1809.

When the empress knew that her fate was decided, she shed such an abundance of tears that for many months her sight was too much affected to enable her to endure any light. Nevertheless, her determination was taken, and she proved herself superior to her elevated station, by sacrificing her crown for the benefit of her country. Napoleon ardently desired an heir, through whom he might ensure repose to France, and the throne to his dynasty: Josephine had never had any children by her second marriage; she therefore consented to the divorce, and in 1810 descended from one of the most brilliant thrones in the world. She also consoled and encouraged her children, who were deeply afflicted at the circumstance, and, but for her remonstrances, would have quitted France for ever. She reminded them that the emperor had been their father and benefactor, that they owed him unbounded obedience, and that they would add to her sorrows if they manifested any discontent to their sovereign; in fact, she used such forcible arguments that they not only consented to remain in the country, but also to be present at the marriage of the emperor and Marie Louise.

Josephine, to whom the Senate by unanimous vote granted the privilege of preserving the title of

empress, retired at first to her domain of Navarre, which was formerly the property of the Princes of Bouillon, and previous to the revolution a most enchanting spot; but she was obliged to expend large sums in repairs, especially in the restoration of the fountains, which, having been neglected, caused much unhealthiness in the neighbourhood. In this beautiful retreat she held her court, which was composed of devoted friends whom the emperor had permitted her to choose. Her *dame d'honneur* was the amiable Madame d'Arberg, who had held the situation of *dame du palais* when Josephine was reigning empress; Madame de la Rochefoucauld being at that time *dame d'honneur:* but that lady having requested the emperor to grant her the same situation with Marie Louise as she held with Josephine, Napoleon was so indignant at her ingratitude to the mistress who had loaded her with favours and honoured her with her friendship, that he not only refused her the place in the court of the new empress, but also desired Josephine to dismiss her, and appoint Madame d'Arberg; being well acquainted with that lady's great attachment to his discarded wife.

Surrounded by a circle of affectionate friends, who preferred following her in her retreat to

remaining at the brilliant court of Marie Louise, Josephine occupied herself with doing good and benevolent actions. After her divorce she renounced several projects which she had nourished for a long space of time, to avoid anything which appeared like inconsiderate expense, and from that motive deprived herself of the palace she had intended building at Navarre, the existing one being too small. The emperor was very desirous that she should have it, and offered to pay one half of the expense, but Monsieur Berthaut's estimate of the charge amounted to three millions of francs, and she would hear no more of it, but contented herself with a very indifferent residence.

During her stay at Navarre the emperor corresponded with her regularly every week; some of his letters which are published contain passages full of sincere affection, proving with how much regret he must have consented to part from her. Josephine's favourite residence was Malmaison, where she spent the greater part of the year. In this cherished spot Napoleon frequently visited her and consulted her on political affairs. His anxiety for her health and comfort was incessant, and he constantly gave indications of his esteem by surrounding her with a thousand little attentions.

At Malmaison, as at Navarre, Josephine was an object of love and veneration to all classes, for her benevolence was universal. She was passionately fond of flowers, and had hothouses which produced many rare and beautiful specimens; but she dispensed with other gratifications to enable her to indulge that one; and, that she might not diminish the sums which she set aside for the relief of the poor, or for the purchase of presents which she destined for those she loved, she suppressed her menagerie, and, with the exception of some favourite kangaroos and paroquets, all the animals were given away. Her mornings were spent in visiting the poor and discovering what they were in need of, or in reading and entertaining musical friends; in the evening she was always brilliantly attired, and received the foreign princes, ambassadors, and nobility.

Napoleon invariably spoke her praises with enthusiasm, even at the Tuileries, and in presence of Marie Louise, who conceived such an extreme jealousy and aversion for Josephine and all that recalled her to her mind, that in going to Saint Germain she deviated from the usual road in order to avoid passing Malmaison.

Josephine's joy at the birth of the King of Rome

was most unaffected; she was at Navarre when it occurred, on the 20th of March, 1811, and gave a magnificent fête to celebrate the occasion. Her son Eugene brought her the news from Paris, he having been present at the birth, with the other princes and princesses. On offering his felicitations to the emperor, Napoleon said, "You are going to visit your mother, Eugene; tell her that I am sure she will rejoice at the news of my happiness more than any other person. I should have written her ere this, had I not been absorbed with the pleasure of looking at my son; I only tear myself from him to attend to the most indispensable duties. To-night I shall acquit myself of the sweetest and most agreeable of all; I shall write to Josephine." The next evening the empress received a letter from Napoleon informing her of the event. "Cet enfant," he wrote, "de concert avec *notre Eugène*, fera mon bonheur et celui de France." The woman to whom he addressed himself was fully capable of appreciating the charm of the phrase in which he so affectionately coupled the name of her son with that of his own.

Notwithstanding Napoleon entertained so great an esteem for his first wife, his opinion of women in general was unfavourable, and he had several adven-

tures which confirmed him in his judgment of them. He confided all his infidelities to Josephine, who received his confessions with the indulgence of a friend, although on some occasions they caused her vexation. By this conduct she retained the heart of the man she so much cherished, and who frequently remarked "*que rien ne valait Josephine,*" although his conduct proved that he sometimes forgot her. But the emperor never encouraged licence, or infringed upon the laws of morality by any public examples of irregularity; and those who were known as his favourites compromised themselves by their extravagance and indiscretion. The two who were most conspicuous as such were Mademoiselle Grassini and Madame Gazani. The former was a singer at the theatre of Milan, and charmed him with the beauty of her voice and the elegance of her form; she was conducted to Paris by the Prince of Neufchâtel, and Napoleon made her rich presents; but, finding that she was attached to Rode, the celebrated violinist, he sent her back to Italy. Having been stopped near Naples by a party of brigands, she first endeavoured to work upon their compassion to induce them to spare her valuables; but, seeing that all her entreaties were useless, and that they were deter-

mined upon having the jewels that were on her person, she begged them to take all she possessed but the portrait of Napoleon, and in fact assisted the robbers in despoiling the cherished image of the diamonds which surrounded it. It is said that Mademoiselle Grassini afterwards married Rode, with whom she went to Russia.

The other favourite was Madame Gazani, the daughter of an actress attached to the theatre of Genoa, the place of her birth. In one of his journeys to Italy, Napoleon was dazzled with the extreme beauty of her countenance and her charming figure, and promised her an appointment for herself and her husband if they would go to Paris. She accepted his offer, and was immediately made reader to the Empress Josephine in 1809. Her husband was also appointed to the situation of receiver-general at Evreux.

Madame Gazani was tall and very graceful, although thin; her complexion was dark, but her features were faultless; her black eyes were beautifully brilliant, expressing with promptitude all she said and all she heard. She was not a proficient in music, but sung agreeably and possessed an enchanting voice.

After her arrival in Paris, the favourite desired

to be on an equality with the *dame du palais* and the other ladies holding situations at court, and Madame de la Rochefoucauld endeavoured to oppose her in many things, till at length Madame Gazani complained to the emperor, who desired that she should not be interfered with.

Her influence did not, however, last long, for, two months after her instalment at the palace, Napoleon, dreading the power which her attractions might obtain over him, was determined on parting from her, and, entering one day roughly into his wife's apartment, he said, "Chassez Madame Gazani; il faut qu'elle retourne en Italie." But Josephine, who foresaw her own divorce, sympathised with the favourite, whose similar position to her own excited her interest, and she replied, "No, Sire, I will keep her with me; it would be cruel to abandon a young woman to despair, after having torn her from all her duties: I shall, perhaps, ere long be as unhappy as she is; we shall weep together. Suffer her, therefore, to remain with me." The emperor yielded to her request, but upon condition that he should see her no more.

From that moment, Josephine, forgetting all the motives she had formerly had for aversion to her, loaded her with kindness; and when Madame Gazani

accompanied her to Navarre after her divorce, she remarked to her friend, Madame d'Arberg, that, in the sad moment of so cruel a separation, it was a gratification to have a companion to whom she could speak of the emperor with the same melancholy pleasure as she would listen, and who entertained the same sentiments for him as she did herself.

After the death of Josephine, in 1814, Madame Gazani retired to her château of Condé, where she lived peaceably and respectably until 1826, when she was attacked with brain fever, on recovering from which she imprudently bathed in the Iton, which caused her death.

The Empress Josephine, in her honourable retirement, at the age of forty-six, was surrounded with the esteem of all Europe; and, possessing a fortune of two million francs a-year, she had ample means of satisfying her benevolent inclinations. Besides numerous pensioners to whom she gave considerable alms, she founded a school for poor orphans, in which they were taught reading, writing, accounts, needlework, and the manufacture of lace. She loved the fine arts, and encouraged those artists whose prosperity had been obscured by the troubles of the revolution or other misfortunes.

She not only purchased their works, but bestowed

on them all the favour and interest that is due to merit. Animated by her, Gros, Girodet, and Guérin cultivated with success the pursuit of art; Spontini, Méhul, Paër, and Boildieu obtained eminence as musicians; and Fontanes, Arnault, Andrieu, and Lemercier produced admirable additions to modern literature.

On several occasions, such as her birthday, or the day of her fête, the public exhibited testimonials of affection and rejoicing, but Josephine always endeavoured to repress them lest they should cause displeasure to the Empress Marie Louise. She was very desirous of seeing the young King of Rome, and frequently regretted that she should never have that gratification, feeling certain that his mother would not consent to it; but Napoleon conducted her to Bagatelle, where the young prince was, feeling assured that she loved him as much as if he were her own son.

He often retired to an apartment which she reserved for him at Malmaison, where he wrote and transacted state business; and the empress, having preserved an attachment for him which bordered upon worship, never made use of the room in his absence, or suffered any of the furniture to be moved, but kept everything exactly in the same state as the

emperor had left it. The volume of history rested on the desk with the mark in the page where he had stopped reading; the pen with which he had dictated laws to Europe retained the ink; and on the table lay the map of the world, upon which he had confidentially pointed out to her his future projects and the countries he intended to conquer, and which in some places bore marks which appeared to have been made by a movement of impatience, occasioned, perhaps, by some slight observation. Josephine alone removed the dust which adhered to these objects, which she considered *relics*, and none but herself might enter the sanctuary.

Confiding in her sagacity, the emperor communicated to her his intention to undertake the fatal expedition to Russia in 1812. Fearing the result of this gigantic enterprise, Josephine in vain entreated him to abandon that project; but his determination was made, and her gloomy presentiments were realised: from which time her anxiety for the emperor and his prosperity kept her in a continual state of agitation, which injured her health.

In 1814 the entrance of the foreign armies into Paris was her death-stroke; she not only had to deplore the fall of the great man to whom she had

been united, but also beheld her daughter deprived of her diadem, and her son's glorious sword become useless in his hand.

Previously to the entrance of the foreign troops, on hearing that the Empress Marie Louise had retired to Blois, Josephine hastily left Malmaison and retired to Navarre, in a state of melancholy and despair which her attendants vainly endeavoured to tranquillize. When arrived there, the ladies of her household remarked that she sought solitude, and spent the greater portion of her time in reading and re-reading the letters she had at different times received from the emperor, one of which she carried for many days in her bosom.*

Her situation was most distressing, for in the calm of the château of Navarre she was ignorant of what she had to fear, or what to hope. Those who followed her from Malmaison could not, however, conceal from her the fact that the capital had

* It was the last letter that the Emperor wrote from Brienne, in which he says, amongst other things, " . . . En revoyant ces lieux, où j'ai passé ma première enfance, et comparant l'état paisible où j'étais alors à l'agitation et aux terreurs que j'éprouve aujourd'hui, je me suis dit bien des fois, J'ai cherché dans plusieurs combats à rencontrer la mort; je ne puis plus la redouter; elle serait aujourd'hui un bienfait pour moi; . . . . mais je voudrais revoir une seule fois Joséphine!"

yielded, that the allied sovereigns had entered, and that Napoleon had retired to Fontainebleau.*

On learning that terrible catastrophe which decided the fate of the emperor, Josephine became nsensible, and was for some hours attacked with

* The following is a letter which Napoleon wrote to her from that town :—

"*A l'Impératrice Joséphine, à Malmaison.*

"CHÈRE JOSÉPHINE, "*Fontainebleau*, 16 *Avril*, 1814.

"Je vous ai écrit le 8 de ce mois (c'était un Vendredi), et peut-être n'avez-vous pas reçu ma lettre : on se battait encore ; il est possible qu'on l'ait interceptée ; maintenant les communications doivent être rétablie. J'ai pris mon parti : je ne doute pas que ce billet ne vous parvienne. Je ne vous répéterai pas ce que je vous disais. Je me plaignais alors de ma situation : aujourd'hui je m'en félicite, j'ai la tête et l'esprit débarassés d'un poids énorme ; ma chute est grande, mais au moins elle est utile, à ce qu'ils disent—Je vais dans ma retraite substituer la plume à l'épée. L'histoire de mon règne sera curieuse ; on ne m'a vu que de profil, je me montrerai tout entier. Que de choses n'ai-je pas à faire connaître ! Que d'hommes dont on a une fausse opinion ! . . . J'ai comblé de bienfaits des milliers de misérables ! qu'ont-ils fait dernièrement de moi ? . . . .—Ils m'ont tous trahi, oui, tous ; j'excepte de ce nombre ce bon Eugène, si digne de vous et de moi. Puisse-t-il être heureux sous un roi fait pour apprécier les sentimens de la nature et de l'honneur !—Adieu, ma chère Joséphine ! resignez-vous ainsi que moi, et ne perdez jamais le souvenir de celui qui ne vous a jamais oubliée, et ne vous oubliera jamais. Adieu, Joséphine !

"NAPOLEON.

"P.S. J'attends de vos nouvelles à l'île d'Elbe : je ne me porte pas bien."

fainting fits. A sad silence reigned throughout the château, and her atttendants were overcome with melancholy consternation. At length, recovering her strength and energy, she exclaimed, "I ought not to remain here, my presence is necessary to the emperor; I shall fulfil the duty of Marie Louise! Since she has abandoned him, I will remain with him. I only agreed to separate from him while he was happy; *now* I am sure he expects me." After which tears came to console her heart, which was breaking with the weight and sadness of her thoughts. She then said to Monsieur Beaumont, "You will however remain here with me until the allied sovereigns inform me of their intentions towards me; I am certain they will render all due homage to the first wife of Napoleon." During her short stay at Navarre she was constantly engaged in writing or conversing on the political position of France, and the words, "Ah! s'il m'avait écouté!" often escaped her lips with a sigh.

Some days after her arrival at Navarre she received a letter from the allied sovereigns, who expressed a wish to visit her at Malmaison. This mark of consideration deeply affected her, but at first she hesitated to accept the invitation, thinking that Napoleon's first wife should henceforward be

invisible to all eyes. But powerful considerations (for the welfare of her children) induced her once more to return and do the honours of Malmaison.

On returning to her beloved residence, she found that a guard of honour had been placed there; her property had been respected, and she felt herself in the midst of a new court embellished by the first persons in Europe. The Duke of Berri, fearing that the recent events must have caused her great anxiety and alarm, sent the Count de Mesnard to assure her that he should be too happy to do anything that would be agreeable to her, for whom he entertained as much respect as admiration.

The Emperor Alexander testified the greatest friendship for her and her children, and frequently dined with them at Malmaison; moreover, her son Eugene was most cordially received by the king, Louis XVIII., who embraced him, and declared that as soon as peace was announced he would make him a marshal of France, for that he considered him a brilliant example to the army; and that he ought to be surnamed the *Bayard du siècle.* He also received Queen Hortense with great distinction, and she retained the honours of her rank.

A short time after her return to Malmaison,

Josephine, whose health had been indifferent since the emperor's exile, felt very unwell on returning from a grand dinner which Queen Hortense had given to the allied sovereigns at Saint-Leu-Tavernay. Her medical attendant, Monsieur Horeau, administered some medicine which composed her, but it was evident to all her friends that she suffered much. Lord Beverley and his sons breakfasted with her on the following morning, when she remarked that since Napoleon's fall the English alone had had the generosity to speak of him with respect and admiration; and justly criticised those who, far from sympathising with him in his unexampled misfortune, presumed not only to blame the errors which they had formerly justified, but even invented others of which he was not capable; she also expressed her astonishment that Marie Louise should have been restrained by secondary considerations from joining the husband whom she professed to love tenderly.

"Although I am no longer his wife," she added, "I would join him to-morrow, if I did not fear to create some disagreement between himself and the companion he has preferred to me. It is above all in this moment of his abandonment that it would be more agreeable to me to be near him, to assist him

in supporting his weariness at the island of Elba, and to share his griefs."*

Those who were acquainted with Josephine knew the sincerity of her expressions. Her own sex, above

* The following is a letter which she addressed to Napoleon at the island of Elba :—

"SIRE, "*Malmaison*, 6 *Mai*, 1814.

"C'est seulement aujourd'hui que je puis calculer tout l'étendue du malheur d'avoir vu mon union avec vous cassée par la loi ; et que je gémis de n'être pour vous qu'une amie, qui ne peut que gémir sur un malheur aussi grand qu'il est inattendu. Ce n'est pas de la perte du trône que je vous plains ; je sais par moi-même que l'on peut s'en consoler ; mais je me désole du chagrin que vous aurez éprouvé en vous séparant de vos vieux compagnons de gloire. Vous aurez regretté non seulement vos officiers, mais les soldats dont vous vous rappeliez les figures, les noms, les brillant faits d'armes ; que vous ne pouviez tous récompenser, disiez-vous, parce qu'ils étaient trop nombreux. Laisser de pareils héros privés de leur chef, qui partagea si souvent leurs fatigues, aura été pour votre cœur une douleur insupportable; c'est celle-là surtout que je partage. Vous aurez eu encore à pleurer sur l'ingratitude et l'abandon d'amis, sur lesquels vous croyez pouvoir compter. Ah ! Sire, que ne puis-je voler près de vous pour vous donner l'assurance que l'exil ne peut effrayer que des âmes vulgaires ; et que, loin de diminuer un attachement sincère, le malheur lui prête une nouvelle force ! J'ai été au moment de quitter la France, de suivre vos traces, de vous consacrer le reste d'une existence que vous avez embellie si long-temps. Un seul motif m'a retenue, et vous le devinerez. Si j'apprends que, contre toute apparence, *je suis la seule* qui veuille remplir son devoir, rien ne me retiendra, et j'irai au seul lieu où puisse être dèsormais pour moi le bonheur, puisque je pourrai vous consoler, lorsque vous y êtes isolé et malheureux ! Dites un mot, et je pars.

Adieu, Sire. Tout ce que je pourrais ajouter serait de trop. Ce

all, will understand the redoubled affection with which she was inspired by Napoleon's position. A great misfortune has often served to reanimate a love which has almost expired, and to render most women capable of sacrificing all and everything to procure some consolation for the man whose presence under happier circumstances they had avoided and it is therefore the more astonishing that Marie Louise, who always manifested great affection for the emperor, should have abandoned him in the hour of his misfortune. As wife and mother, her place was at Saint Helena: there she would have been more powerful and more respected than in the pompous court of her father, which was ill suited to the wife of an unhappy and an exiled man. Her most zealous advocates have never attempted to justify her on that point, and doubtless posterity will condemn her, as many of her contemporaries have done; whereas Josephine will be judged as she proved herself to be—the best of wives, and the most eligible of the two women to have shared the throne, the

n'est plus par des paroles que l'on doit prouver ce que vous inspirez; et pour des actions, il me faut votre consentement.

"JOSEPHINE.

"P.S. La Malmaison à été respectée; j'y suis entourée des égards des souverains étrangers, mais je voudrais bien n'y pas rester."

basis of which was strengthened by the love the nation bore her, and maintained (until his fatal separation from her) by the glory of Napoleon's arms.

On the 19th of May, the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia having gone to dine with Josephine at Malmaison, she determined, in opposition to her physician's advice, to do the honours of her table; she was however so exceedingly unwell before the repast was concluded as to be obliged to resign her place to Queen Hortense. From that moment her malady assumed a serious appearance: the Emperor Alexander visited her on the following morning, and, observing her to be much altered since the preceding day, proposed to send his own physician to visit her, but she refused, from the fear of disobliging Monsieur Horeau. Her complaint was a species of gangrenous quinsy, which increased so rapidly that on the evening of the same day she had great difficulty in articulating. Every effort was made to stop the progress of this frightful disorder, but in vain! The amiable sufferer bore her pain with exemplary patience, and by her affectionate looks endeavoured to console those who surrounded her. She heard that the celebrated flower-painter, Redonté, had arrived at Malmaison, to copy two

rare and beautiful plants which were in her hothouse, and signified that she wished to see him. When he approached she gave him her hand, and then gently repulsed him, intimating that she feared her complaint was infectious. "Next week," she said, "I hope to see you at work upon a new chef-d'œuvre."

On the 29th of May she desired to receive the sacrament in company with her children, who were absorbed with grief at the frightful ravages which the disease was making upon the countenance of their adored mother. The Emperor Alexander went almost daily to visit her, upon which occasions she always thanked him for his attentions with looks of gratitude, for the difficulty of speaking increased to a painful degree. On the day of her death he arrived at Malmaison at the moment she had given her last blessing to her children, who, kneeling beside the dying empress, could not address a word to the Russian monarch, but their sobs expressed the depth of their grief.

"At least," said Josephine, "I die regretted; I have always desired the welfare of France. I have done all in my power to contribute to it; and I can assure all who now surround me in my last moments that the first wife of Napoleon never caused

the shedding of a tear." These were almost her last words; she expired on the 29th of May, 1814.

The remains of the Empress Josephine were placed on a bed of state, surrounded by numerous wax-lights, in a room which was hung with black; a richly decorated altar was raised to the right of the bed, where the mass for the dead was repeated at stated hours; and during the three days that elapsed between her death and interment, more than twenty thousand persons paid their last visit to Josephine.

The funeral took place with great magnificence, at mid-day on the 2nd of June, in the modest little church at Ruel, the parish in which Malmaison is situated, and was attended not only by all the high and powerful in the land, but also by an immense population of the middle and lower classes, who assembled to manifest their gratitude and sincere regrets.

The corners of the grave-cloth were held by the Grand Duke of Baden, who was married to Josephine's niece, Stephanie de Beauharnais; the Marquis de Beauharnais, her brother-in-law; the Count Henry de Tascher, her nephew; and the Count de Beauharnais, chevalier d'honneur to Marie Louise. General Sacken, aid-de-camp to the Emperor of

Russia, and the King of Prussia's adjutant-general, headed the procession on foot, followed by a great number of foreign princes, ambassadors, marshals, and senators; different orders of fraternity in the parish carrying banners: and twenty young girls, dressed in white and singing psalms, composed a part of the cortège, the sides of which were formed by troops of Russian hussars and national guards, while two thousand poor of all ages closed the procession. It is calculated that more than four thousand neighbouring inhabitants had assembled near the church to pay their last homage to the woman who so well merited the title of *the mother of the poor and afflicted.*

Monsieur de Barral, the Archbishop of Tours, assisted by the Bishops of Evreux and Versailles, performed the funeral service, and the corpse was deposited in that part of the cemetery in which the three hundred persons who perished in the Rue Royale at the marriage of Louis XVI. were buried.

General Sacken was charged by his master, the Emperor Alexander, to inform Josephine's relatives who had assembled at Malmaison to attend the funeral, that, being profoundly afflicted by the death of the empress, he was desirous of dedicating the thirty-six hours that he had to remain in Paris

to the society of the *excellent* Prince Eugene and his sister; and he remained with them until he quitted the capital.

The little church of Ruel was covered with black cloth drapery on the occasion of her funeral; no ornament or inscription decorated the walls, but the tears of the proudest sovereigns of Europe mingled with those of the poor of France to pronounce the funeral oration of the good Josephine. Her children afterwards placed her remains in a magnificent tomb of pure white marble. The Empress is represented in a kneeling attitude, attired in the imperial costume, and apparently praying for France. The only words engraved on this beautiful monument are, *Eugène et Hortense à Josephine.*

EMPRESS, QUEEN, AND REGENT, MARIE LOUISE.

DAUGHTER of Francis II., Emperor of Austria, and of Marie Thérèse de Bourbon, Princess of Naples and Sicily, and niece of Marie Antoinette, Marie Louise was born at Vienna, in the year 1791; she was a descendant of Henry IV. of France by Philip Duke of Orleans, second son of Louis XIII.,

and by Elizabeth of Orleans, who was married to Leopold Duke of Lorraine. Marie Louise was exceedingly well educated, loved study, and was mistress of the French, Latin, and English languages; she also cultivated music and painting with great success. She was very fair and possessed a dignified deportment; but, although very amiable to those with whom she was intimate, her manners were formal and cold in society.

In 1807 she lost her mother, and, her father having contracted a third marriage, Marie Louise would have led a solitary and weary existence at the court of Vienna, if her taste for the arts, and her industry in cultivating them, had not enabled her to make rich acquisitions and provided her with an inexhaustible fund of amusement.

When Napoleon conducted his great and victorious army into the heart of Germany in the year 1809, Francis II. quitted Vienna, leaving his capital and his daughter, the Archduchess Marie Louise, who was confined to her bed by indisposition, in the power of the French monarch, upon which occasion he paid great attention to her, and bestowed on her much kindness. Marie Louise frankly expressed her gratitude to the magnanimous conqueror, and the emperor, who had deter-

mined on his divorce, destined the young archduchess to provide France with direct heirs to the throne.

He accordingly signed a treaty of peace with Austria, the condition of which was, the hand of Marie Louise. On his return to Paris the dissolution of his marriage was pronounced, and France was made acquainted with the projected alliance with Austria,—an alliance to which the nation had always a repugnance, which it formerly manifested on the occasion of the marriage of Louis XVI. with Marie Antoinette.

In 1810 Alexander Berthier, Prince of Neufchâtel and Wagram, was sent to Vienna to conduct the princess to France, and received her hand in the name of Napoleon, in a magnificent tent which was erected for the purpose at Braunau, where her father gave her five hundred thousand francs in gold before her departure. The archduchess found all the ladies that were to compose her court assembled at that place; they were chosen from among the most illustrious and ancient of the nobility, and at their head was the Queen of Naples and the Duchess of Montebello. All the Austrian ladies attached to her service were admitted to kiss her hand and then take leave of her; her head governess, Ma-

dame Lazanzky, alone being permitted to remain with her for a short space of time.

Each evening during her journey to France, instead of taking repose, Marie Louise found a magnificent fête prepared for her entertainment, and a page awaiting her arrival with a letter and a present from the emperor. At Soissons a camp was erected for her reception, at which Napoleon waited to receive her; and as soon as he was informed of her approach, instead of conforming to the ceremonials which he had himself regulated, he sprang into the carriage of his betrothed, and conducted her directly to the château of Compiègne, where she was obliged from political motives to part with Madame Lazanzky, to whom she was tenderly attached.

Magnificent fêtes were prepared in Paris for the reception of the young empress, who, brilliant with youth and happiness, entered the capital in the triumphant car of her illustrious consort, accompanied by a superb retinue, in the midst of unanimous acclamations. The civil form of marriage took place at the château of Saint Cloud, and the religious ceremony was performed by Cardinal Fesch in the great gallery of the Louvre at Paris.

In the midst of all the pomps and rejoicings on

the occasion, an unfortunate catastrophe occurred, which recalled to the recollection of the public the disasters that happened at the marrage of Louis XVI. A fire broke out at the residence of Prince Schwartzenburg, the Austrian ambassador, when numerous victims were consumed,—amongst others, the Princess Schwartzenburg; and the empress and several other ladies were indebted for their lives to the courage and coolness of Napoleon.

Marie Louise accompanied the emperor in several journeys through France, and was universally welcomed as the wife of Napoleon, though unanimous regrets were bestowed on the excellent woman whose place she occupied. They hoped to find in the empress, as in her predecessor, that unalterable benignity, that gracious compassion for misfortune, that protection for the arts, and that inexhaustible benevolence which solaced so many evils; instead of which, she was dignified and unbending, perfect in court etiquette, and mild, but heartless. The courtiers truly had an empress, but the people of France had no longer a mother. By degrees the enthusiasm which was displayed on her arrival abated, and many who had left Josephine were eager to return to her, knowing that her

heart was too generous to refuse pardon, even for neglect.

The splendours of the throne did not dazzle Marie Louise, who was an enemy to state affairs. Destitute of ambition, she refused to listen to the counsel of her mother-in-law, who advised her to take advantage of the emperor's affection for her by initiating herself in the affairs of state; advice which she afterwards repented having refused to heed, when her husband left her the regency at that critical period when serious circumstances required talent and energy proportionate to the perils which menaced the state.

In 1811 the wishes of Napoleon and his vast empire were accomplished by the birth of the hereditary prince and King of Rome. Marie Louise was in imminent danger, and endured cruel sufferings on the occasion; and the emperor, having been informed by the celebrated physician, Dubois, that he feared it would be necessary to sacrifice either the mother or the child, exclaimed, "*Sauvez ma femme! peu n'importe le reste.*"

In the year 1812 Napoleon resolved to make war with Russia, and assembled all his allies at Dresden, to which place Marie Louise accompanied him, and met her father, who was at that time an

ally of France. The éclat and splendour of the entertainments and ceremonies which took place on the occasion surpassed anything of the sort that had ever before occurred; and Marie Louise, whose court was composed of kings and queens, appeared attired in dresses which were literally covered with diamonds.

But this grandeur was soon dissipated by the misfortunes which the rigorous climate of Russia caused the great army, the disasters of which shook the throne of the conqueror. He, however, re-organised new forces, and in 1813 hastened to defend the frontiers of France. On leaving Paris Napoleon confided the regency to Marie Louise, whose name was from that time inscribed upon all the acts of government.

Though amiable among her friends and within the confines of her court, the empress was far from affable in public, and disliked participating in political affairs, which the imperious nature of events necessarily imposed on her, and which, as a wife and mother, she should have made it a duty to accomplish with the energy which the importance of circumstances required. In that position she should have endeavoured to rouse the enthusiasm of the citizens, to have sustained her dynasty by rendering herself popular, and prevented the de-

fection of the dignitaries of the empire by affability. All this Marie Louise neglected to do; nevertheless, the French valiantly defended every foot of their territory, which was deluged with their blood. In vain Napoleon exhausted all the resources of his talent and genius; abandoned and betrayed, his army, which had hitherto been victorious, was weakened by superior numbers.

The emperor hastened towards Paris, but in the mean time a council was held at the Tuileries, and, notwithstanding the strenuous opposition of Monsieur de Talleyrand, Marie Louise, who had nothing personally to fear from the approaching enemy, yielded to timidity, and precipitately abandoned the capital, which she had defended with her brother-in-law, Joseph Bonaparte, with whom she retired to Blois; upon which the town capitulated, and the allied sovereigns of Russia, Prussia, and Austria entered with their troops. Napoleon retired to Fontainebleau, where he was forced to sign his abdication of the imperial power; and on the 20th of April, 1814, took leave of his kingdom and his soldiers on his departure for the island of Elba.

At Blois the empress vainly endeavoured to continue the acts of the regency; she issued a brilliant proclamation which was impressed with

a military and national spirit, but without success. General Sacken, one of the Russian emperor's aide-de-camps, conveyed her from Blois to Orleans, where he confided her to the care of Prince Esterhazy, who was charged to present her to her father at the château of Rambouillet. After having received her father's embrace, Marie Louise placed her young son, the King of Rome, in his arms, but Francis II. was little affected by her misfortunes or the claims of his offspring, having silenced the voice of nature to lend a willing ear to the insinuations of a dark policy, which had induced him to assist in overturning the throne of his daughter and grandson. This circumstance rendered his presence in Paris so revolting, that he was coldly received on all sides. If it was indispensable for him to visit that town which his daughter had so ungenerously abandoned, he might at least have arrived *incognito*, and not at mid-day, surrounded by a brilliant staff. On his entrance not one cry of welcome was uttered, not a hat was raised; the people seemed to have forgotten that he was a monarch, and looked upon him only as a bad father profiting by the misfortune of his child.

Francis II. sent Marie Louise to Austria, and assigned her the magnificent and picturesque châ-

teau of Schoenbrunn for her residence. The treaty of Fontainebleau, which maternal feelings ought to have urged her to reject with indignation, secured to her the duchy of Parma, Piacenza, and Guastalla, upon condition that she would formally renounce all right to the crown of France for herself and her son for ever.

In 1815, when Napoleon escaped from Elba, and with unprecedented success accomplished the audacious enterprise of re-entering France at the head of three hundred men, Marie Louise attempted to quit Schoenbrunn with her son: but her measures were badly taken; the police-officers stopped her carriage, and the Emperor Francis a second time opposed the prosperity of his daughter.

From that time she was separated from her son, the Duke of Reichstadt, who was retained at the palace of Vienna, where he languished in delicate health until the year 1832, when he died in the arms of his mother, who repaired to that court for the purpose of seeing him once again.

In 1816 Marie Louise took possession of her ates of Parma, which the Queen of Etruria having laid claim to, the Holy Alliance only permitted her the temporary enjoyment of; perhaps it was also to punish her for her attempted escape. In those

territories the archduchess has cultivated her talent for the arts and literature, protected the learned, and executed some works of public utility. After Napoleon's death, being deprived of any habitual communication with her family, she formed a private marriage with her prime minister, the Count de Niepperg, by whom she had two children.

This nobleman was the issue of an ancient family of Wirtemburg, a skilful general, and an experienced diplomatist; he was possessed of an agreeable person and polished manners, but had lost an eye in one of the wars which Austria was obliged to sustain against Napoleon. He was forty years of age when Prince Metternich placed the administration of the government of Marie Louise in his hands, with unlimited power. Complaisant, talented, and protected and patronised in all his actions by the Austrian cabinet, he succeeded in pleasing the archduchess, and made such rapid progress in obtaining the confidence of a young woman who was separated from her adopted country and the few French who followed her after the allied powers of Europe had deprived her of her exalted fortune, that she at length gave him her hand.

The Count of Niepperg governed the duchy of

Parma with talent and judgment for fourteen years, and died in 1828. His marriage with the archduchess not having been declared, that princess still retains the title of the widow of Napoleon the Great.

Marie Louise is condemned for two great faults, by one of which—the having yielded Paris to the foreign army—the ruin of the imperial dynasty was much accelerated. Had she followed the example of her grandmother Marie Thérèse, by gaining the hearts of her people and reviving their energy, they would have rallied round her, and, like the Hungarians, have sworn to perish for their queen. Certainly the daughter of one of the chiefs of the coalition could not have had the dread of being outraged, or having her palace plundered by the enemy, as an excuse for abandoning her post; and if, by the courage and perseverance of his mother, the young Napoleon had succeeded to the vacant throne of France, the foreign powers would not, in all probability, have restored the Bourbons to the government of an empire that had been so gloriously obtained and so skilfully occupied.

The second fault for which Marie Louise has been blamed is one which few women under any

circumstances would have committed,—the having declined to share her husband's exile: by joining him she might have softened the rigours of his captivity, and soothed his days by the employment of her talents and accomplishments. Perhaps the consolation of having a beloved companion to assist in bearing the burthen of his sorrows might have lengthened the term of his existence, and the arid rocks of Saint Helena might never have echoed the last sigh of Napoleon Bonaparte.

It would be superfluous to devote separate chapters to the reigns of Louis XVIII. and Charles X., who, when Counts of Provence and Artois, were married, more than thirty years before their accession to the throne, the former to Marie Josephine Louise, and the latter to Maria Thérèse, both princesses of Savoy, and sisters, who lived and died in obscurity and exile.

QUEEN MARIE AMELIE.

Marie Amelie de Bourbon, daughter of Ferdinand I., king of the Two Sicilies, and of Marie Caroline of Austria, was born at Caserta in Naples, on the 26th of April, 1782. Her education was

confided to Madame d'Ambrosio, a lady whose great merits are little known, but through whose judicious instructions her royal highness acquired the love of those noble and simple virtues by which mankind both contribute to the happiness of all around them, and ensure to themselves a pure and quiet conscience.

The Princess Amelie had hardly attained her tenth year, when the course of her education and the happy calm of her youthful days were disturbed by political storms; and, in 1792, a French fleet appeared in the Bay of Naples, under the command of Admiral La Touche Treville, and spread terror throughout her father's court. Her existence was one of continual alarm from that period until the year 1798, when the French army invaded Naples, under the command of General Championnet, and she was obliged to escape with her august parents to Palermo, where she remained with her mother Queen Caroline during the Neapolitan revolution.

In June, 1800, her royal highness accompanied the queen to Leghorn, and from thence to Vienna, and continued in that city until 1802, by which period the victories of Suwarrow in Northern Italy had compelled the French troops to evacuate Naples, and the queen and Princess Amelie re-

turned to that kingdom. Shortly after her arrival, she witnessed the marriage of her eldest brother, Prince Francis of Calabria, with Maria Isabella, Infanta of Spain, and of her sister, Marie Antoinette, with the Prince of Asturias, afterwards Ferdinand VII. The latter union, which robbed her of the society of a beloved sister, caused Marie Amelie the most profound regret, and her sorrows were increased by a recurrence of political misfortunes, when Napoleon again invested Naples with a French army, and placed his brother Joseph on the throne, which compelled her father to quit the kingdom, and once more retire with his family to Sicily.

In 1806 the Princess Amelie had to deplore not only the death of the cherished sister, Marie Antoinette, whose loss had cost her so much sorrow on her marriage, but also that of her two eldest sisters, Marie Theresa, Empress of Austria, and Marie Louisa, Grand Duchess of Tuscany. At this period political events had caused Louis Philippe, Duke of Orleans, to sojourn in England, and he established himself with his two brothers, the Duke de Montpensier, and the Count de Beaujolais, in a quiet retreat at Twickenham. There, his name, his virtues, and the charm attached to his adventu-

rous travels, rendered him an object of equal admiration and respect to the English people, and of esteem and distinction to the English government. The tranquillity of his existence was however disturbed by the death of his brother the Duke de Montpensier, who fell a victim to consumption in 1807; and his brother, the Count de Beaujolais, having been attacked with the same malady, the Duke of Orleans determined to remove him to a milder climate. Circumstances left him no choice but that of Malta or Madeira, and the two brothers arrived at Malta in the month of May, 1808. A short residence there having served to increase the languor of the suffering prince, and the physicians having declared that the air of Malta was pernicious to his brother, the Duke of Orleans addressed a letter to Ferdinand I., informing him of his situation, and asking permission to transport his brother to Mount Etna; but almost before the king's reply could leave Palermo, the prince had ceased to exist.

After paying the last sad duties to the Count de Beaujolais, the Duke of Orleans embarked for Messina, where he received the reply of Ferdinand I., which was expressed in most flattering terms, and contained an invitation to Palermo. There, in 1808, he first beheld the Princess Amelie, who in

her retirement cultivated those precious qualities which can alone fortify the soul in misfortune. The Duke of Orleans was not long at the court of Ferdinand before he remarked, and fully appreciated, her eminent qualities; but at that period the king, her father, was interested in sustaining the cause of his son-in-law, Ferdinand VII. of Spain, for which purpose he sent his second son, the Prince Leopold, to that kingdom; and the Duke of Orleans, who was desirous of seeing his mother, and of proving his regard for the king, took leave of the princess he so much esteemed, and accompanied her brother upon this expedition. The princes were received at Gibraltar, but the English opposed their entering Spain, and while Leopold was retained in Gibraltar, Louis Philippe was conducted to England.

In June, 1808, the house of his mother, the Duchess of Orleans, who resided at Figueras, was besieged by the French, and destroyed by the bombs; upon which occasion that princess and her daughter, Madame Adelaide, were obliged to escape in the night, and take refuge amongst the insurgent Spaniards. Under these circumstances the Duchess was desirous of placing the Princess Adelaide under the guardianship of her son, Louis

Philippe, and therefore sent her to Malta; but on arriving there, she was informed of her brother's departure for Palermo, and from thence for Gibraltar. The princess repaired to Gibraltar, but was again disappointed in meeting the object of her search and her affection; the duke had departed for England; thither she went, and happily met him at Portsmouth, at the moment he was about to embark for Palermo, where the princess who had won his affections still remained with her family, Napoleon having placed Joachim Murat upon the throne of Naples.

On learning the cruel position of his mother, the Duke of Orleans proposed to his sister to hasten to relieve her from it; but the commander of the frigate had received express orders not to suffer the Duke of Orleans to approach Spain, and a hazardous event enabled the brother and sister to achieve their filial wish, at least to a certain extent. They espied a little vessel near the coast of Spain, and the Chevalier de Broval, who had been attached to the family from their childhood, offered to leave the frigate which conveyed the prince and princess, and board the little coasting vessel. The proposition was accepted, signals were exchanged, the Chevalier de Broval reached the Peninsula, and

repaired to the Duchess of Orleans, whom he conducted in safety to Port Mahon, while the Duke of Orleans and Madame Adelaide continued their voyage to Sicily, where they received a cordial welcome from the king and queen, and the Princess Amelie.

A warm friendship was established between Marie Amelie and the Princess Adelaide, cemented perhaps by mutual sympathy for the misfortunes that had pursued them since their earliest years, and increased by the affectionate attachment of the duke for both. The Princess Amelie was not insensible to the excellent qualities of her admirer, and her mother, Queen Marie Caroline, seeing that their hearts and characters assimilated, and that her daughter's sentiments were in conformity with those which she had inspired, united with the king in expressing her approval of the union. The Duke of Orleans desired but one thing more to complete his happiness; it was the presence of his only absent relative, his revered mother. He therefore again set out with the Princess Adelaide, and after a speedy voyage arrived at Port Mahon, where he once more had the joy of embracing the beloved parent whom he had not seen for the space of sixteen years. The little family immediately returned to

Palermo, where they were anxiously expected; and once more united to all that was dear to him, Louis Philippe received, with the hand of Marie Amelie, a reward for his virtues, and a solace for his past troubles. The marriage was celebrated on the 29th of November, 1809.

The newly-married pair for the first time enjoyed the charms of a peaceful existence, which lasted until the month of May in the following year, when the Spaniards, a prey to the horrors of war, entreated the Duke of Orleans to assist them with his counsel and military skill; he therefore repaired to Cadiz, where he remained until September, 1810, and returned to Palermo a few days after the Duchess of Orleans had given birth to her son Ferdinand Louis Philippe, Duke of Chartres (the late lamented Duke of Orleans).

In the bosom of her affectionate family, the happy wife and mother, untroubled by the political movements that were agitating Europe, enjoyed all the felicity that springs from a fond and well-assorted union, until 1811, when disturbances manifested themselves in Sicily, in consequence of differences which arose between the Queen Marie Caroline and her allies, the English, who desired to have the entire government of the island. Two parties were

formed, one for England and another for the queen; and notwithstanding the efforts of the Neapolitan troops, who supported her cause, the English obliged her to quit Sicily; and the good King Ferdinand and his amiable daughter were compelled to submit to the cruel separation.

Three years had expired, during which the Duchess of Orleans gave birth to two princesses, Louise Marie, now Queen of the Belgians, and Marie Christine, afterwards Duchess of Wurtembourg, when the news of the re-establishment of the Bourbons on the throne of France reached the Court of Palermo, upon which the prince, who was desirous to revisit his native land, hastened to Paris, and was affectionately welcomed by the royal family. He immediately after returned to Sicily to conduct the duchess and his children to France, and installed them in the palace of his fathers, the *Palais Royal*. The closest union existed between the princes of the royal family; and Louis Philippe, who was appointed colonel-general of the Hussars, rejoiced over the birth of a fourth child, Louis Charles Philippe, Duke of Nemours, born in October, 1814. The return of Napoleon from the island of Elba was a new cause of anxiety to him and the duchess; and the rapid progress of that ter-

rible convulsion induced the duke to require his illustrious wife to leave Paris, and undergo a temporary separation from him, in order to secure his children from the dangers that menaced all the members of the royal family. Marie Amelie therefore quitted Paris with her children on the night of the 12th March, 1815, and repaired to the duke's former retreat at Twickenham, where she was shortly joined by her royal husband.

On the 8th of March, 1816, the Duchess of Orleans gave birth to a princess (who died two years after at Neuilly), and after the re-establishment of her health, returned, with her family, to France, and once more inhabited the royal residence of the branch of Orleans. But the favourite abode of the illustrious pair was the château of Neuilly, situated at some distance from Paris, beyond the superb arch and magnificent avenue which form the eastern entrance to the capital.

This charming spot will need nothing more to render it interesting in history than the circumstance of its having been the one hallowed by the return of the exiles, and the favourite dwelling of the most happy and illustrious of families. It was the constant object of care and embellishment; and, though by the quiet style of its architecture it appears to

shun the pomp of a royal residence, is arranged with the most perfect taste, and is both a classical and a sylvan retreat. There all appears disposed for tranquillity and study; for the peaceful enjoyments of life and the games of childhood; the dwelling of princes and princesses; and, at the same time, the abode of simplicity and Christianity.

Around the chateau of Neuilly extend vast gardens, thick shrubberies, verdant lawns, shady paths, and gay pastures. In this agreeable dwelling the Princess Amelie reared her young family; there the young princes gaily spent their vacations; and there, beneath the eyes of a fond mother, the princesses acquired the virtues for which they are distinguished.

The Duchess of Orleans gave birth to her royal highness Princess Clementine at Neuilly, the year after her return to France; and during the five succeeding years, four sons, the Dukes of Joinville, Penthièvre, Aumale, and Montpensier, increased the happy circle.

She partook of the sentiments of the duke, her husband, in considering a public education most advantageous for her sons, and seconded his determination of placing them at the college of Henry IV. Her eldest son, then Duke of Chartres, was a most

distinguished scholar; his studies were extensive, his acquirements many, and, upon the distribution of the prizes, none could count more rewards or marks of approbation for his juvenile successes. Alas! those loved trophies of infancy, the garlands so dear to former remembrances, are all piously preserved by the affectionate mother, whose joy and pride consisted in the happiness of her children.

Near to the cabinet of the Duke of Orleans at Neuilly were the parlours of the Duchess and Madame Adelaide, the cherished sister of Louis Philippe, who shared alike his misfortunes and his prosperity, and who, in her attachment to him, has adopted all his family, in the bosom of which passes her days, and in this happy union devotes herself to the daily performance of good acts. At the château of Neuilly also are to be seen the music, drawing, and school-rooms of the Princesses; the studio of the Princess Marie, the little apartment of each beloved child, and the play-room, which often resounded with merry peals of laughter.

In 1830 the Duke of Orleans was proclaimed Lieutenant-General of the Kingdom, and the revolution still further progressing, Charles X. abdicated the throne; soon after which the firing of a royal salute announced to the inmates of Neuilly that

their delicious retreat was numbered among the royal residences. The Duchess of Orleans was, no doubt, gratified by the establishment of her dynasty upon the throne, and also convinced that there was not one of the royal princes so capable of wielding the sceptre of France as her illustrious husband; but, on her own account, perhaps, there were some tears shed in secret; for it is easy to imagine that the cares of royalty, and the anxieties attached to the crown, must have cost something to happiness. But neither the visits, the royal receptions, nor the military guard, have altered the primitive simplicity of Neuilly; it is the spot of reunion for the scattered family, and the Eden of repose when the noise of the court is hushed.

In 1836 the Duke of Orleans took a voyage on the Mediterranean; and before his return to France, visited Germany, where, at the court of Berlin, he beheld the young Duchess Helena of Mecklenbourg, sister to the reigning duchess: an attachment sprung up between the youthful pair, and the prince, having obtained their majesties' sanction, made her an offer of his hand. The marriage ceremony was fixed for the ensuing year; and the king, who determined upon celebrating it in the palace of Fontainebleau, issued orders for restoring

a portion of its ancient splendour to that magnificent residence. The rich paintings in the gallery of Henry II. recovered their brilliant tints that had been concealed beneath the dust of ages; the gilded door was once more radiant; the histories of Alexander the Great's exploits and weaknesses were again to be seen delineated on the *Escalier du Roi;* the *Salle des Gardes,* near the old *Pavillon de Saint Louis,* displayed its heraldic frescos; Henry IV.'s superb chimney was repaired, and many sumptuous and tasteful works augmented its magnificence.

Their majesties, accompanied by all the court and an immense concourse of people, joyfully repaired to Fontainebleau to witness the marriage of the illustrious pair, whose destinies were so intimately connected with their own; and on the 29th of May, 1837, as the sun's last rays fell upon the royal group and noble assemblage who occupied the terrace, and upon the regiments ranged in the court of the *Cheval Blanc,* a distant signal announced the approach of the prince royal's bride; shortly after she alighted at the foot of the great staircase which conducted to the terrace, and was led by the Duke de Nemours to the King, who, on bestowing his parental benediction, affectionately embraced his

newly-adopted child. The queen received the Princess Helena in her arms, and a rapid interchange of welcomes and smiles reassured the timid bride, and naturalized her in the royal family. The marriage was solemnized the day following, and the fêtes were magnificent; but an untoward accident, which occurred at the Champ de Mars in consequence of the immense crowd that had assembled, when several persons were killed, saddened the gaiety which had everywhere abounded. A grand ball, that was to have taken place at the Hôtel de Ville, was adjourned, and their majesties and the prince and princess royal bestowed abundant aid upon the sufferers and their families, for whom they expressed the deepest commiseration, gave pensions to many, and distributed immense sums among the poor.

The happiness the queen enjoyed in the daily conviction of the regard and admiration her son and his amiable duchess inspired was not, however, unsullied, for there is no permanent joy on earth. Happy are they whose paradise is within their own breasts! Had not the exemplary Queen of the French possessed the peace which a reliance on that Being in whose hand are our destinies, and the assurance that the most beloved are the most tried,

she must have sunk under the anxieties and alarms which the atrocious attempts against the lives of her husband and sons have at different times caused her. But other trials were also reserved for Queen Amelie. She was called to resign her most cherished daughter, the amiable and talented Princess Marie, Duchess of Wurtemberg, whose rare qualities were the charm and admiration of all around her, and who was taken by death from her fond relatives in 1838.

On the 24th of August, in the same year, the young Duchess of Orleans gave birth to Louis Philippe, Comte de Paris; and on the 9th of November, 1840, to her second son, Robert Philippe, Duke de Chartres.

On the 13th of July, 1842, a fatal accident spread mourning over the royal family, who were summoned to witness the last agonies of the heir to the throne of France, upon whom the eyes of the whole nation, civil and military, were turned with love and admiration.

The despair and desolation of the queen upon that melancholy occurrence is beyond description; it was a mixture of firmness and weakness, reason and delirium. It would be difficult to say whose sufferings were most poignant, those of the dis-

tracted and weeping mother, or of the august father, who opposed a dignified resignation to the most profound affliction. "O! if it were but me!" he exclaimed with emotion, as he pressed his dying son to his bosom. When the prince royal had breathed his last, the king generously stifled his own sorrow to alleviate that of the unhappy queen; he drew her away from the chamber of death, and conducted her into a contiguous apartment, where the ministers and marshals were assembled, and who, in the excess of their commiseration, knelt around her and endeavoured to console her, when with true patriotic feeling, which even her agonizing grief had not suppressed, she exclaimed, "What a misfortune for our family! and also, what a terrible misfortune for France!"

After this fatal catastrophe her majesty gave directions that the articles that composed the furniture of the humble chamber in which the Duke of Orleans expired, should be conveyed to the château of Neuilly, and deposited there with other precious vestiges, as a sad but pious *souvenir*. She also desired that a chapel should be erected on the spot where the house stood, and the building is now in progress.

The prince was buried at Dreux, by the side of his sister, the Princess Marie.*

The good Queen Amelie, strengthened by the consolations which religion afforded her, was not only resigned to her misfortune, but also contributed to the consolation of the widowed Duchess of Orleans, to whom she is fondly attached. That highly intellectual Princess has been, from her childhood, accustomed to deep reflection and the study of serious authors. Her retired habits have, in a great measure, rendered the superior qualities, for which she is distinguished, little known; but the high esteem and affection with which she has in-

* The burial-place of the house of Orleans is celebrated in history, having several times been an object of dispute to valiant and ferocious chiefs. Beneath its walls the Counts of Normandy and Chartres fought desperate battles, and the Counts d'Albret and Nevers met in deadly combat. It was for a long time in the hands of the English, from whom Charles V. eventually purchased it. Dreux was a portion of the dower appropriated to Catherine de Medicis, from whom it descended to her youngest son, the Duke of Alençon, afterwards Henry III. It is celebrated as the spot in which the two great captains Condé and Montmorency fought in the cause of religion, and was besieged and taken by Henry IV. of France. The chapel that contains the remains of the family of Orleans was erected on the site of the collegiate church by the late dowager Duchess of Orleans, mother to his Majesty Louis Philippe, three of whose children repose here.

spired her august parents and all the royal family, and the attachment unceasingly manifested for her by the prince royal, are convincing proofs of her great merits. The solidity of her judgment, her superior mind, her good sense, and her inexhaustible charity, afford the best assurances of the excellent education she is capable of bestowing on the future King of the French.

In conferring the most legitimate eulogy on crowned heads there is a certain feeling of embarrassment; but it should not be a motive for withholding that which serves both for precept and example.

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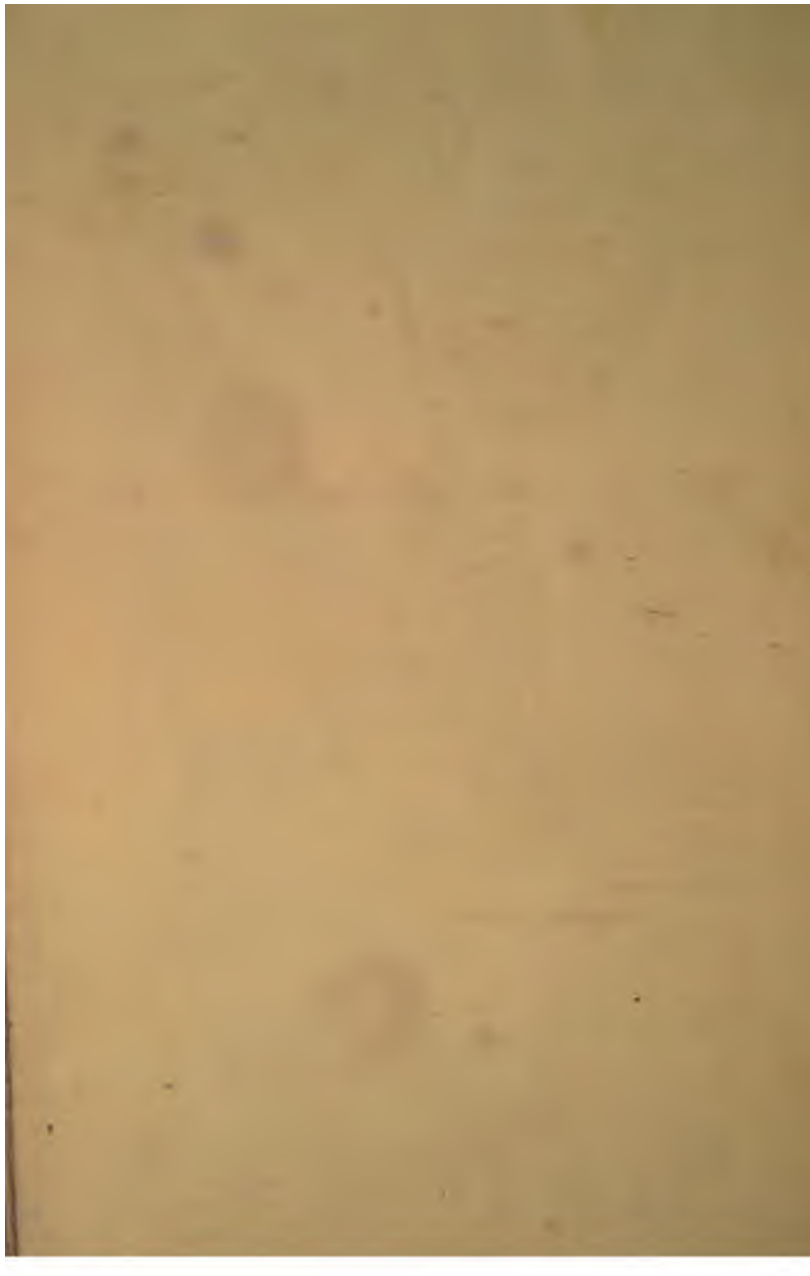

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